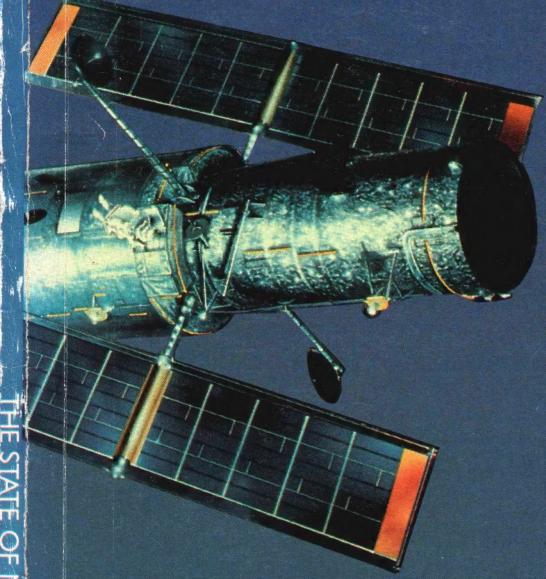


# MUSEUM

News

March/April 1988, Six Dollars



*The State of Museums*



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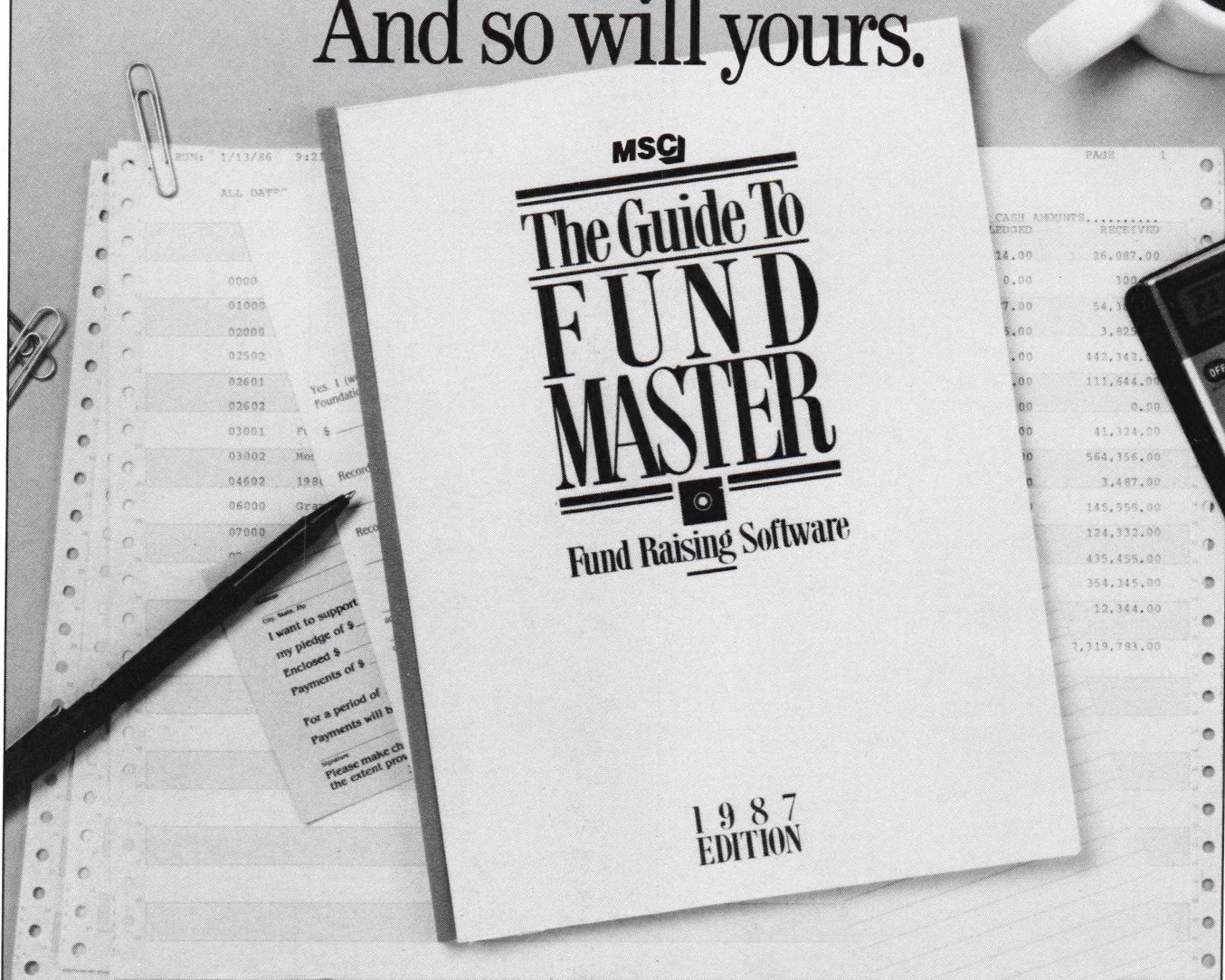


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Reader Service Card #1

In this issue of *Museum News*, we take a look at the state of museums: a task that is made somewhat difficult because, surprisingly, so little data is routinely collected on the operations of our museums. Nevertheless, through scores of interviews with museum professionals around the country, our reporters have been able to assemble a compelling dossier on the health of museums. Andrew Decker, in the lead article, finds that museums are becoming increasingly innovative and skillful in dealing with the many political, economic, and operational uncertainties facing them. Anne Lowrey Bailey, in three separate reports, examines the impact of the stock market, local politics, and corporate mergers on museums' operations. Our round table this time brings together four museum directors and Senator Claiborne Pell, for a discussion of the not-so-distant future. Lorraine Glennon takes a tongue-in-cheek look at museums' high cost of doing business. And for the international report, Terry Trucco writes from London about the impact of Thatcherism on British museums. Senior Associate Editor Tracey Linton Craig assisted in compiling the cover story.

Response to the new *Museum News* has been most gratifying. Some of the letters received early on are reprinted on page six. We have also begun to receive, albeit too late for this issue, letters offering suggestions as well as criticism of some aspects of our new format. A selection of those and other letters will be included next time. As we begin to fine-tune *Museum News*, we welcome your advice and comments.

James G. Trulove

The cover features a composite of images from the collections of seven different institutions, representing the various museum collection types. Pictured (*clockwise from top left*) are: Hubble Space Telescope, The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia; orchid, U.S. Botanic Garden; scarlet macaws, National Zoological Park, Washington, D.C.; quartz crystals, National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C.; garibaldi fish, National Aquarium, Baltimore; *Quaquà! Attaccati Là!* by Frank Stella, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; *Benmore* figurehead, Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Va.

#### Museum News

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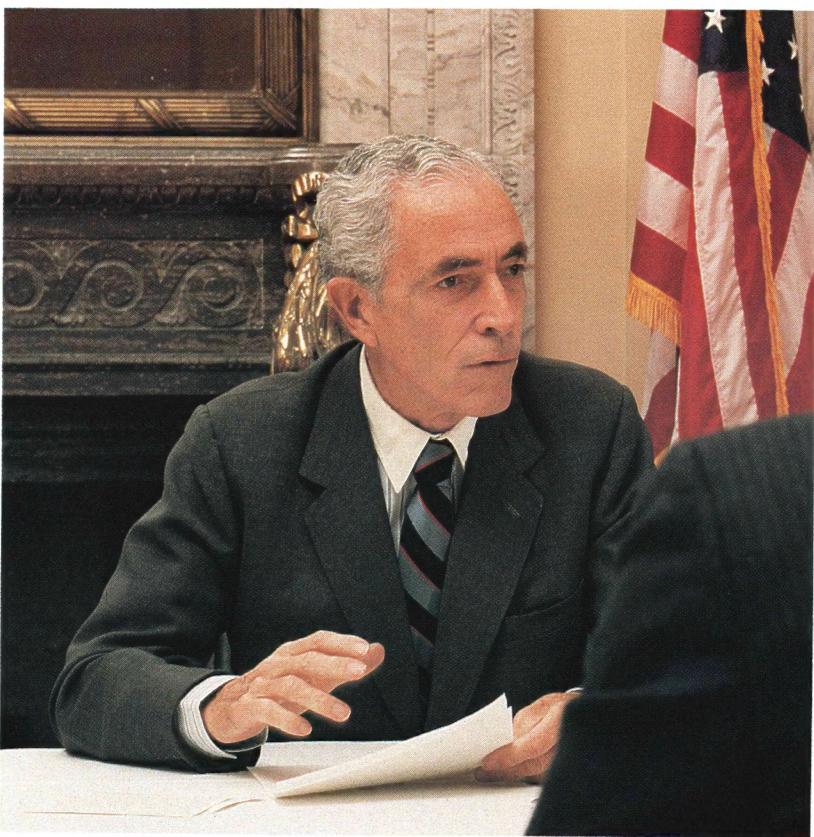
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# MUSEUM

*News*

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Round table participant  
Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.).

## *The State of Museums: Cautious Optimism Prevails*

**T**he bottom line. In interviews with museum professionals and directors, the phrase keeps coming up. "People have a sense that revenues could be more wisely spent and better managed," says Thomas Peter Bennett, director of the Florida State Museum. "When one looks at the track records of universities and museums, and of corporations that are going belly up, one has to wonder if we're doing badly."

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**Congratulations!**

Dear Editor:

I have just read through your inaugural issue of *Museum News* and I am very impressed and envious. I have believed since I came to this organization that to be effective as service organizations we must issue publications that are of the best commercial standards.

Congratulations. You've done just that.

Donald A. Moore  
Executive Director  
Dance/USA  
Washington, DC

Excellent work! The new format for *Museum News* is a major improvement. The contents are excellent. My compliments to all.

Lee Scott Theisen  
Executive Director  
Indiana State Museum  
and Historic Sites  
Indianapolis, IN

Congratulations on the new *Museum News*. It looks wonderful and deals with pertinent topics.

Let us know if we can do anything to assist you and the publication.

Dee Bennett  
Public Relations Director  
Smithsonian Institution Traveling  
Exhibition Service  
Washington, DC

Now that the current *Museum News* is out with its new approach, handsome format, and interesting content, I know that all of you must be receiving many compliments on it. It represents a new vital expression for the AAM and I'm sure will reflect great credit on all who participated in what must have been a most difficult transition. Congratulations!

Best wishes for your continuing success with future issues of the magazine.

Otto Wittmann  
Vice-President  
Toledo Museum of Art  
Toledo, OH

I am writing to express my delight with the new edition of *Museum News*. As I think I said on the telephone, it is the first time I have read the magazine from cover to cover! I thoroughly enjoyed the topical approach for an entire issue and the layout is truly superb. I have only the highest compliments for you and the AAM staff for bringing out such a splendid issue devoted to a subject that is of paramount concern for the entire museum community.

Looking forward to reading the next issue. . . .

Sylvia H. Williams  
Director  
National Museum of African Art  
Washington, DC

Your recent issue was excellent! Concise, clear articles which are pertinent.

Keep up the good work.

Ronald T. Reuther  
President  
Western Aerospace Museum  
Oakland, CA

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**Terry Trucco** is a London-based free-lance writer who contributes regularly to a number of American publications, including the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

## Photo Credits

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## CORRECTIONS

The January/February 1988 issue of *Museum News* is Volume 66, Numbers 2/3. The AAM did not publish a November/December issue.

The cost of the Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum in Texas was \$28 million, not \$2.8 million, as was reported in the last issue.

By Tracey Linton Craig

## Zoo Atlanta— More Than Just a Name Change

Filthy cages, animals mysteriously missing, and a dead elephant were but a few of the many problems facing the Atlanta Zoo three years ago. Some animals had been sold to circuses or allegedly victimized by keepers. These and other problems led the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums to deny the institution accreditation in 1984.

But when the accreditation team visited again in 1987, they not only accredited the zoo, citing complete recovery, but noted that the institution had gone from a borderline operation to "being close to becoming a first-class zoo," according to AAZPA executive director Robert Wagner.

The city, admitting it had failed in running the zoo properly, joined with a civic volunteer group—Zoo Atlanta—to make improvements. Taxpayers okayed a \$16-million revenue bond issue, and the city turned the zoo's operation over to a nonprofit entity and hired Terry Maple, who is credited for much of the turnaround. A "friends" organization raised another \$9 million. Zoo membership rose from 3,000 to 28,360, and there

Denizen of Zoo Atlanta.



# M News

are now four times more trained professionals on staff than there were in 1984.

Today, the zoo is building a primate habitat that will house more than a dozen gorillas and is planning other naturalistic homes for its animals.

### Beyond 504: Making Culture Accessible

When you think of dealing with disabled visitors, are wheelchair ramps and braille exhibit labels the first images that come to mind? There are many other kinds of disabilities, and a variety of ways to make museums more enjoyable and accessible to those with disabilities, according to a new handbook and videotape cassette recently completed by the Smithsonian Institution's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

*Part of Your General Public Is Disabled: A Handbook for Guides in Museums, Zoos, and Historic Houses* outlines common disabilities—from cerebral palsy, vision and hearing impairment to mental illness—and offers suggestions that museum personnel can follow to reduce the number of barriers disabled individuals often face inside museums. The publication and accompanying videotape provide practical information on how to redesign programs and facilities, emphasizing "mainstreaming" rather than separate programs for the disabled.

For more information, contact the Smithsonian Institution, Office of Museum Programs, Arts and Industries Building, Room 2225, Washington, DC 20560.

### At the Conservator's Fingertips

For the first time, conservators and institutions in 65 countries around the world will have online access to a computerized database service that offers a variety of relevant information critical to the conservation of cultural properties.

Funded by the Getty Conservation Institute, the network is the product of more than two years work among the contributing institutions, including extensive systems planning and testing. It is housed on a computer system operated by the Canadian Heritage Information Network, which also provides technical support to the project.

Three online databases provide information on technical literature, conservation materials, and a product/supplier directory. The network also features an electronic mail system that allows colleagues to consult with each other, within seconds, regardless of geographic location.

For details: The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1875 Century Park E., Suite 2300, Los Angeles, CA 90067-2561.

### Studying the Arts

The National Endowment for the Arts and the Department of Education have teamed up to create a national research center to promote the study of performing and fine arts throughout the nation's schools. With offices at New York University and the University of Illinois, and a three-year budget allocation of \$807,000, the center will assess arts curricula and work to improve instruction in visual arts, music, dance, and theater from primary grades through high school. "I think it's fair to say that generally the arts are not taught as a basic, sequential part of the curriculum in schools in this country," said NEA chairman Frank Hodson. "It is our



Roman portrait bust (mid-first century, A.D.) on view at Emory University in July.

hope that we can get a better sense of what is the best way to teach the discipline of the arts."

#### Special Delivery from Italy for Emory

With Roman marble busts scheduled to arrive from Italy for a July 1988 installation, Emory University in Atlanta is preparing for what it hopes will be the first of many international cultural exchanges with the Museo Nazionale Romano and other major museums of antiquities abroad.

The Museo Nazionale, located in Rome and one of the world's largest archaeological museums, will send 22 Roman marble portrait busts ranging

from the late first century B.C. to the third century A.D. The busts will be on display at Emory University's Museum of Art and Archaeology for eight months.

The exchange program will allow the museum to serve as a host institution for works made available from the wealth of material stored in foreign museums. In exchange for a selection of objects that will change annually, Emory will sponsor a research or restoration project at the source institution. In addition, a catalogue of the works on loan will be published jointly by the university and the source institution.

#### Report Profiles Black Museums

A recent member survey completed by the African American Museums Association points to the growing strength of black museums as well as to their current areas of need. According to the report:

- 70 percent of exhibits prepared by black museums never travel
- 88 percent report employment vacancies
- 60 percent have realized increased financial support
- 63 percent conduct research and more than 50 percent produce publications.

In releasing the eagerly awaited *Profile of Black Museums* report, AAMA president Harry Robinson said, "This is the first major effort at collecting statistical data designed to determine just what is the state of the nation's black museums."

While the survey results generally reflected healthy institutions, its findings also indicated that black museums need to diversify their funding bases, become more systematic and aggressive in audience development efforts, develop collections policies and documentation procedures, and intensify conservation and preservation measures.

The report is based on a survey conducted by research consultant Harris Shettel and funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The analysis was derived from responses from 52 museums located in 23 states. Forty-two percent of the respondents are history museums, 19 percent are ethnic cultural centers, 15 percent are art museums, while 13 percent are historic houses or sites.

Copies of the report are available by writing to the AAMA at P.O. Box 50061, Washington, DC 20004-0061. □

## *Directorship*

**James F. Sefcik** was named director of the Louisiana State Museum. He formerly served as assistant director of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison.



**Patricia Blankenship** has filled the new position of assistant director for the Washington State Historical Society in Tacoma.

**Nancy S. Perry**, coordinator of educational programs for the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation since 1985, has been appointed director of the Yorktown Victory Center in Yorktown, Virginia.

The Space Coast Science Center in Melbourne, Florida, has a new first executive director, **Robert G. Tuck**.



**Carol M. Spawn** has been appointed librarian of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. She had been manuscript and archives librarian of the academy since 1978.



**Christina Orr-Cahall**, formerly chief curator of art and director of the art division of the Oakland Museum, has been named director and chief executive officer of the Corcoran Gallery and School of Art in Washington, D.C.



The Rockwell Museum in Corning, New York, has a new director, **Arthur Townsend**. He had been the director of the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum.

## *Development/Membership*



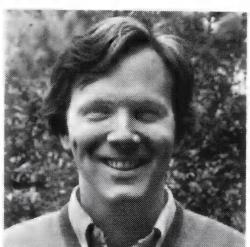
**Thomas E. Lovejoy**, scientific adviser to the "Nature" series, is now assistant secretary for external affairs at the Smithsonian Institution.



**Cheryl McClenney-Brooker** has been appointed vice-president for external affairs at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. McClenney-Brooker represents the museum to its constituencies and funding agencies.

**Maggie Buchwald** has been appointed director of development for the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Most recently she was director of the Golden Anniversary Campaign of the American Ballet Theatre.

**Kendall Hardin** has joined the staff of the Tampa Museum of Art as director of development. She manages fund raising, marketing, and public relations for the museum.



A staff member of Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts, **William B. Reid**, was promoted to assistant director of development and membership.

**Paula Kripaitis-Neely** has filled the position of marketing and public relations director for the Science Museum of Virginia in Richmond.

## *Archival*

The new state archivist for the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City is **Gordon Hendrickson**.

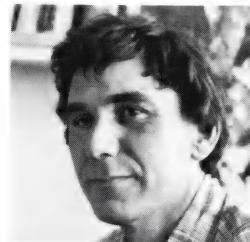
Museum of Art, Williamsburg, Massachusetts. She previously was chair of the art department at Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Virginia.

## *Curatorial*



**David Ryan** assumed the position of assistant curator of collections for the Albuquerque Museum in New Mexico.

## *Exhibits*



**Guy R. Herrington** was appointed exhibits preparator at the Albuquerque Museum, New Mexico.

## *Education*

**Barbara Jean Pepper** accepted the position of manager of educational programs at the Detroit Science Center.

The Brunnier Gallery and Museum of Iowa State University in Ames hired **Dorothy Dunn** as education coordinator.

## *Conservation*

**Susanne Benda** has joined the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka as chief conservator, and **Pete Sixbey** has been promoted to objects conservator. □



**Nancy Mowll-Mathews** has been appointed the first Prendergast curator of the Williams College

Send personnel information to: Carlotta M. Eike, Museum News, 1225 Eye St., NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005.

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# The Welfare of British Museums

## Thatcherism Promotes Greater Self-Reliance

By Terry Trucco

*"The first and most important thing is for the arts world to accept the economic and political climate in which we now operate. The objective of this government is to reduce the role of the state and expand the scope for private initiative, choice, and enterprise."* —Arts Minister Richard Luce in a speech to an arts group on July 8, 1987.

It was a neat summation of the Thatcher government's views on arts support, though hardly necessary given the audience. In recent years, museum and arts specialists here in London have talked of little else. First came the grousing, as it became clear that change was inevitable. Admission charges, plural funding, merchandising schemes, and even garden-variety fund raising were, for the most part, viewed with extreme distaste, tasks outside the realm of the museum professional.

But attitudes throughout the field have changed dramatically in the last few years, sometimes by choice, often by force. These days directors talk easily of museum shops and corporate-friendship plans. Museums with suitable buildings rent their rooms for photography shoots, book launches, and private parties. Museums are also sprucing up their premises, improving food services, and, in most cases, energetically wooing new audiences.

More important, museums all over Britain have been reevaluating their programs, their policies, their very reasons for existence. Accountability is the new watchword, to one's specialization and to one's audience. Gone are the days when a museum felt all it had to do was exist. Education and outreach programs have sprung up in an effort to involve more people.

Museum officials are also learning to plan ahead, to set priorities, to em-



London's Dulwich Picture Gallery.

phasize practicalities, and to live within their means. Most administrators have accepted the fact that the days of the great socialist giveaway are over—forever. Elizabeth Esteve-Coll, the new director of the long-troubled Victoria and Albert Museum in London, coolly described herself as an administrator, not a scholar, in an interview shortly after taking the job. Her goal was clear, she added: "I want an organizational structure capable of weathering a tough economic future. On my tombstone I want the words 'She made it work.'"

To be sure, not everyone in the field is thrilled with what Thatcherism has wrought. There's concern over government efforts to encourage national museums to sell off parts of their collections. Many are worried that scholarship and connoisseurship will be lost in the commercial roar. Some also feel that tax incentives need to be beefed up if corporations

and private donors are to play a larger part in museum support. The biggest fear is that the government's ultimate goal is to make museums and the arts totally self-supporting, though few think this is actually a genuine threat.

The consensus in the field is surprisingly positive. "There is a feeling that there have certainly been benefits as a result, despite the problems that have been caused," says Graeme Farnell, director-general of the Museums Association. Indeed, one looks hard these days for an outright naysayer. "They're there but you don't hear their voices raised in this climate," says Stephen Jones, director of London's Leighton House Museum.

One reason critics are quiet at the moment is the government's new arts funding plan, announced in November 1987, which boosts the entire arts budget by 17 percent over the next three years. This "new departure in arts funding," as it was billed, is a boon for planning, though with the inevitable Thatcher fillip. "We want the arts to know what the government is going to do for them—and what it is not going to do," stated arts minister Luce.

The budget was good news for national museums, which get a building and maintenance increase of over 20 percent for this year alone. In contrast, funding for the Museums and Galleries Commission, which provides acquisition and conservation money for nonnational museums, only goes up 11 percent over the next three years. The message as seen by the museum world is that while the government will fund its 23 national museums, it is questioning the premise of funding for local museums.

The budget is also shaped to encourage arts institutions to become more self-reliant in both growth and development. Incentive funding got a nod with a hefty 70-percent rise to 3



The Moorish Room of the Leighton House Museum, which now raises half of its operating costs.

million pounds for the Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme, which provides matching grants for new corporate gifts of up to 25,000 pounds. To date it has helped generate some 12 million pounds in new arts money.

Even with that welcome boost, Britain's national museums are in a dicier position than those of West Germany or France, where government spending is truly lavish (*see page 32*).

If there is no special increase in funds, museums each get a grant from the government adjusted for the official inflation rate. But civil service pay increases, which apply to most national museum employees, have tended to top that. These days many national museums are in a situation similar to that of the Imperial War Museum in London, which uses 80 percent of its government grant for salaries.

That situation prompted the War Museum to initiate a voluntary admission policy, believed to be the first among national museums, in 1985. Unlike London's Victoria and Albert Museum, which has seen a 35-percent drop in visitors since introducing voluntary admission, the War Museum has neither lost scores of visitors nor been besieged with complaints. Director Alan Borg thinks this is because his

museum is quite specialized, with little casual trade.

But the general view here seems to be that it is somehow less acceptable for the big, generalized art museums to charge admission than science and sociology institutions. Though close to one third of Britain's publicly supported museums now charge admission (as opposed to almost 70 percent in the private sector) the issue remains emotionally charged. Glasgow, Scotland, which currently supports seven municipal museums, wanted to charge admission to anyone who wasn't a local taxpayer, senior citizen, student, or unemployed. Deciding

that that would be too hard to police, they have left admission free.

The nonnational museums number over 2,000 these days, with the bulk receiving funding from local government, or council authorities as they are known. In the past, authorities were often the only source of support for the nonnationals, but that too is changing. A good illustration is London's Leighton House Museum, the Victorian home of artist Frederick Lord Leighton, which consists of several carefully restored rooms, period paintings, and a large collection of the artist's works on paper. The council authority supporting the museum has

provided funds for major building improvements as well as operating expenses, but for the last year or so the museum has generated nearly 50 percent of its operating expenses, minus salaries, from corporate and private donations, as well as from rentals of its distinctive facilities. That, says director Stephen Jones, has made it easier to ask for additional funds.

But the authority has to have the money in the first place. This year, the future of at least three museums, including the fine Manchester City Art Gallery, is in jeopardy because the government is cutting back funds to the big-spending local authorities that financed them. Last fall London's William Morris Gallery, housed in the famous Pre-Raphaelite's one-time home, was told it would either have to close completely or cut its staff to one curator, sharply curtailing hours and services. The staff's reaction was to kick up a fuss, alerting the national newspapers, television stations, and local MPs. No decision has yet been reached, but head curator Norah Gillow was cautiously optimistic that the council might change its mind. "I think the local authority was actually surprised that the world does not want this museum to close," she said.

Indeed, concern over the loss of museums like the William Morris underscores just how important museums have been in the last 20 years. Museums in Britain now attract over 60 million visitors a year. More striking, a new museum opens somewhere every fortnight. Impressive, too, is the growth of the independent museums, which charge admission and, in some cases, are self-supporting. But most notable has been the change in thinking. Giles Waterfield, director of the Dulwich Picture Gallery, a private foundation-funded museum in suburban London, notes that the only survival strategy for galleries like his is to continually raise funds. "And in the seventies, that simply would not have been understood." □



The public rallied to save the William Morris Gallery and its collection, including this Morris embroidery.

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# Something Old, Something New

## And Something Added On

By Gretchen G. Bank

### Asian Export Art Wing

Peabody Museum  
Salem, Massachusetts

The oldest continuously operating museum in the United States, the Peabody Museum will open a new, \$8.1-million Asian Export Art Wing this spring. As the first American museum devoted exclusively to Asian export art, the wing will exhibit more than 1,000 decorative and functional objects made for export from Japan, China, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The Peabody was originally founded by the East India Marine Society of Salem in 1799, and merged with the China Trade Museum

of Milton in 1984, a move that greatly enriched the collection.

The first museum project designed by the architecture firm Kallmann, McKinnell and Wood of Boston, the facade of the three-story, 27,000-square-foot building is of red brick, in deference to traditional New England construction, and incorporates an Asian-style "moon gate" at entry level. Other architectural features include several skylit galleries, notably one for the exhibition of precious metals, and a grand 40-foot circular staircase. A continuing capital campaign to support both the new wing and renovations to existing buildings has raised \$10 million to date.



### The Walters Art Gallery

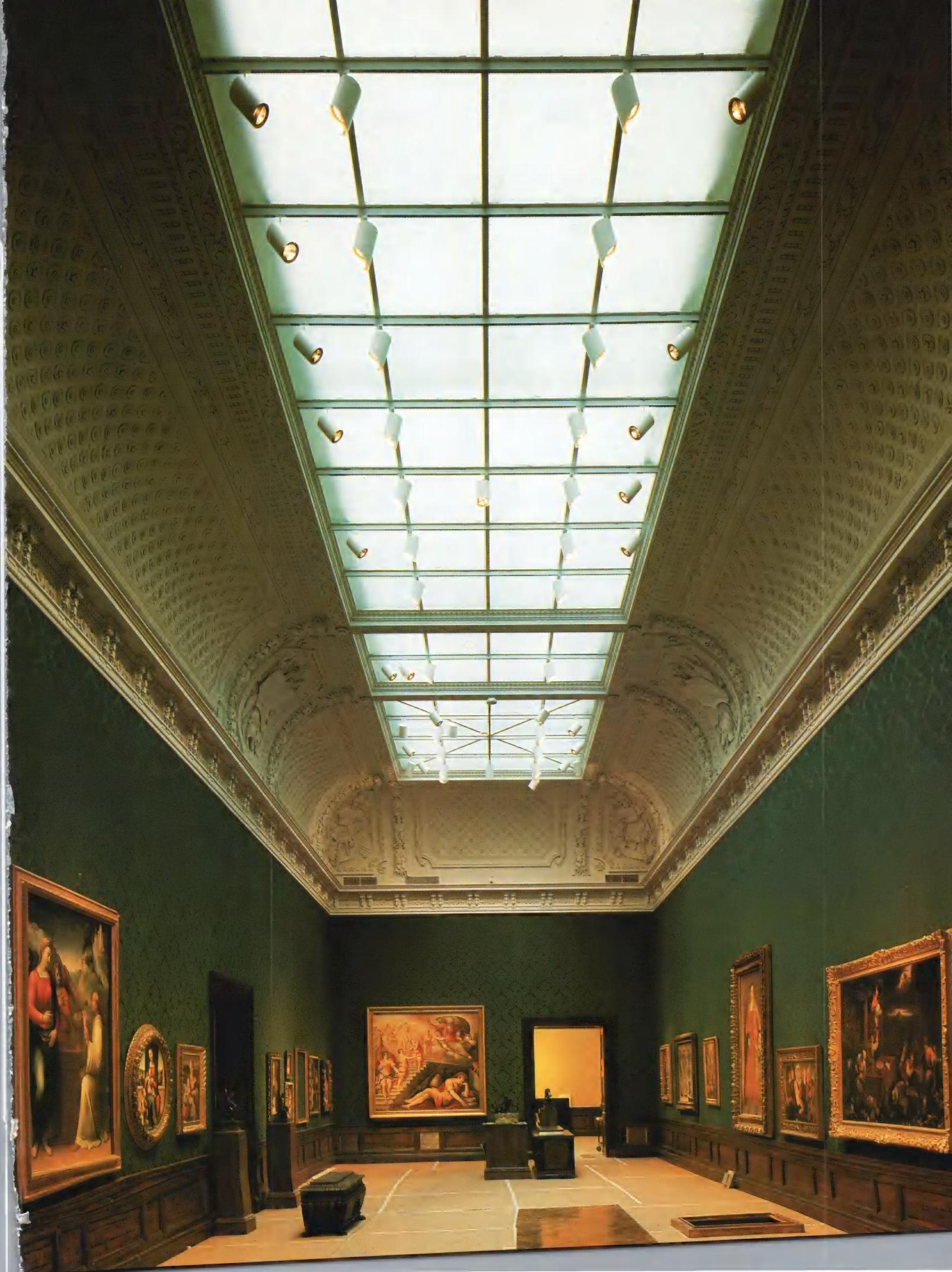
Baltimore, Maryland

The \$6.1-million renovation of the 28,000-square-foot Walters Art Gallery, completed at the end of 1987, not only restores the original 1904 Gallery building to its former glory, but also places the museum in the ranks of the most modern of today's museums. Maximum protection for the significant collections has been the focus of the renovation and upgrading effort, with the resealing of the exterior walls, and the installation of new systems for environmental controls in the storage areas, heating and ventilating, security, and lighting. One of the most sophisticated in the world, the lighting system combines natural and artificial light, and incorporates light-sensing electronic devices that control the amount of natural light in the picture galleries.

Designed by William Adams Delano of Delano and Aldrich to display the private collection of William T. Walters and his son Henry, the 1904 Gallery features Italian Renaissance Revival elements such as an inner court copied from the Palazzo Balbi in Genoa, a second-floor loggia, two-story Grandes Galeries for paintings, and an Armor Gallery. Renovation architects are James R. Grieves Associates Inc. of Baltimore, whose work also includes restoration of the original marble steps, oak floors, decorative plasterwork, walnut wainscoting, and the replacement of wallpapers with Renaissance-style fabric wall coverings.

*Left:* The Peabody's new Asian Export Art Wing opens this spring.

*Right:* After renovation, the Walters will control natural light in its 1904 Gallery.

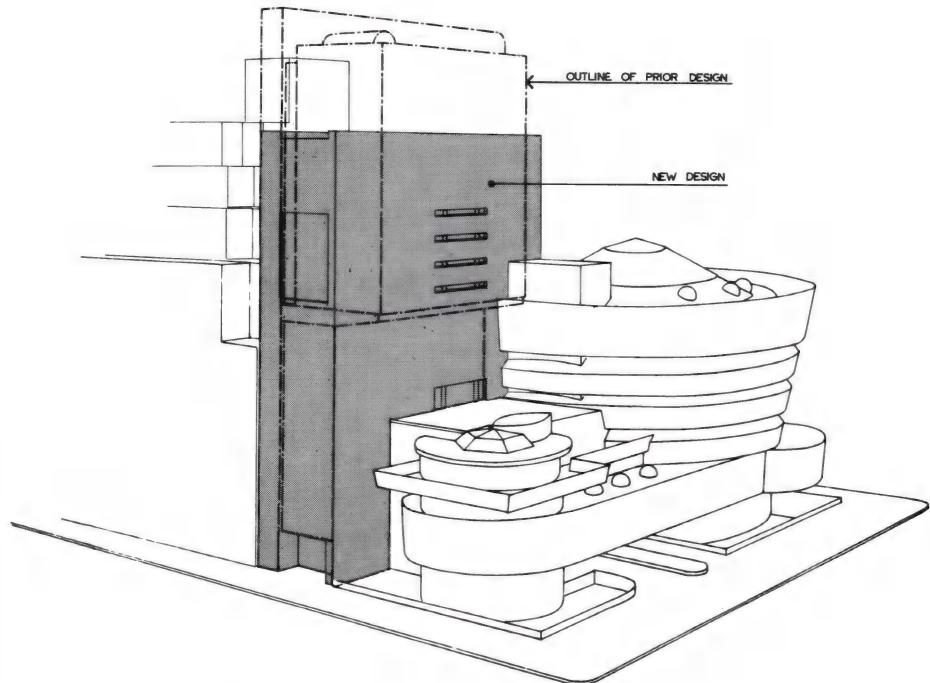


**Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum**

New York, New York

Following months of controversy, New York City's Board of Standards and Appeals has approved the necessary variances for construction of the addition to Frank Lloyd Wright's 1959 Guggenheim Museum. The expansion, a revised design by architects Gwathmey Siegel and Associates, will provide space for the display of works in the permanent collection that have had to be stored for years. The annex will more than double exhibit space, provide a new sculpture terrace, and give the public access to the entire Frank Lloyd Wright interior for the first time. New spaces will house displays of 20th-century masterworks and nonpublic functions that were previously in the original building.

The 23,240-square-foot addition as designed is "similar in shape, mass, volume, and placement to the structure that Frank Lloyd Wright contemplated for the site," according to Peter Lawson-Johnston, president of the Guggenheim Foundation. Faced in limestone, which is compatible with both the original museum and existing neighborhood structures, the building will rise six stories above the present four-story annex, designed by Wright's son-in-law William Wesley Peters. Alterations from the first design proposed by Gwathmey Siegel include a height reduction of 29 feet, a reduction in floor area of 20 percent, the elimination of a cantilevered section, and the use of limestone cladding in place of colored tile. Although the floor area reduction now requires the museum to move its library, archives, and storage facilities off-site, the decision was made to do so in order to support an annex design that was responsive to the concerns of the neighborhood and the architectural community. □



New Guggenheim expansion design shows response to local sight-line concerns.



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## LET'S GET A FEW THINGS STRAIGHT FIRST.

We're not going to tell you just to book your trip through Swan Hellenic.

There are a lot of decisions to be made, including the decision about which travel company to use. But before you even start thinking about that, you've got to do some important organizing.

Who within your museum is going to be responsible for your travel program? Who will set up the budgets and make the schedules?

Ultimately, the responsibility for success must be placed on one individual, and it must be someone who has enough time and ability to make sure your museum's financial commitment is not wasted.

## PLANNING A TRIP IS NO VACATION.

The one thing you don't want to do is plan a trip to a place your members have no desire to visit. So first you must determine what will sell.

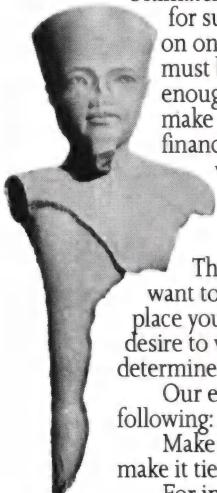
Our experience suggests the following:

Make the trip unique. And make it tie in with your museum.

For instance, if you are going to have a big exhibit of Mediterranean art, you might consider a trip to explore relatively unknown ruins in ancient Greece.

Then begin planning an itinerary that would be difficult or impossible to duplicate on another trip. You might be able to arrange participation in an archaeological excavation, or a viewing of artifacts not accessible to the public, or some other special side trips.

It is also important to arrange



well-thought-out lectures by creditable and personable guest speakers.

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## MAKE THE RIGHT MARKETING DECISIONS, AND YOU'RE IN BUSINESS.

It's one thing to have a great product—in this case, a trip to the Mediterranean—and it's another thing to sell it.

To do that, you've got to reach and motivate the people you're tailoring your product to. You must prepare effective literature and get it into the right hands.

If you don't know how to do that, you must find someone who does.

Above all, you have to maintain a clear view of what it is you're selling, and allow yourself enough time to promote it and sell it properly.

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Ask for the names of other museums they've arranged trips for, and check out those references. Don't be swayed by price alone. Your museum's reputation rides on the quality of service this company will provide.

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**William Wordsworth and the Age of English Romanticism**

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Reader Service Card #12

# The State of Museums: Cautious Optimism Prevails

By Andrew Decker



**T**he bottom line. In interviews with museum professionals and directors, the phrase keeps coming up. "People have a sense that revenues could be more wisely spent and better managed," says Thomas Peter Bennett, director of the Florida State Museum. "When one looks at the track records of universities and museums, and of corporations that are going belly up, one has to wonder if we're doing badly."

How's the health of American museums? Stephen E. Weil, deputy director of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., says with a slightly caustic smile,

Caravaggio's *The Cardsharks* (ca. 1594-95), 37 $\frac{1}{16}$  x 51 $\frac{9}{16}$  in., a banner acquisition by the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas.

"82.5." As Weil suggests, it's hard to tell. There is no Department of Museum Starts, though many museums have been building or renovating. Attendance is up widely over 1985, although 1986, with its increased domestic travel because of international terrorism, was tough to beat. Collections are growing, if slowly, and some banner acquisitions made news, including the purchase by the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, of a long-lost Caravaggio masterpiece, *The Cardsharks*, for a little under \$15 million. New or recently acquired and installed computers abound. Ambitious efforts to address needs—including the



Common Agenda for History Museums, which hopes to standardize information categories and provide the field with something akin to a Union List of Collections—have been taken up. Institutions that had been on the ropes made strong comebacks, such as the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City and the New Jersey Historical Society, whose museum was staggering along with a zero budget two years ago.

With all the good news, there are cautiously cheery outlooks for the future. It's a time of opportunities, museum directors say, of networking and cooperation, of reaching broader

audiences and of presenting sparkling exhibitions that capture the audience's imagination and programs that both educate and entertain; a period of better training for museum professionals and of stronger, more focused educational programs at the museums themselves.

It is also a time of marketing and finance. Words and phrases like "entrepreneurial activity," "profit-centers," "zip code sorts," "impacting," and "product exposure" stream out of directors' mouths. The jargon comes from being more conscious of operations and money, according to several directors and museum professionals, and from the need to run



museums and get funding for them in a more business-like manner. In two words: more professionalism.

Despite the wealth and expansion of museums, there are qualms about how the well-being is gained and where it is going. There are also brutal examples of weaknesses. (See sidebar on the Milwaukee Public Museum.) While many professionals embrace the operations-oriented slant and view it as a sign of maturity and self-reliance, to some it is overdone. "Boards of trustees are stocked with corporate types who ask directors, 'Have you taken management courses? Have you attended market-

ing workshops?'" Bennett says, and the questioning, though sometimes reasonable, breeds insecurity.

Critics of the professional-management school, such as Marc Wilson, director of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri, contend that much of museums' success is now seen in terms of attendance, revenues, capital campaigns, and computer usage—areas where corporate standards of performance can be tracked. Wilson says that building collections, an effort usually judged long after a director is gone, should be the primary mission of a museum. (Indeed, when asked to name their priorities, nearly all the people interviewed for this article headed their lists with some form of development or operations: bolstering endowments, revenues, or staff levels, and upgrading collections management and maintenance. Only two of 30 people put augmenting their collections at the top of their lists.)

The issues and concerns expressed are hardly new. They relate to the fundamentals of museums and have always existed. There are shifts in emphasis, however, that characterize the present, such as enormous concern among art museums about the rapidly rising market and attendant indemnification costs, and the dampening effect such costs may have on special exhibitions.

By and large, however, directors feel squeezed for money, as always, but optimistic. Even so, they are skittish: corporate support is tightening, gifts have decreased slightly, possibly because of changes in the tax laws, Congress is debating what is and is not related to business income, and whether nonprofit museums will have to pay taxes on proceeds from store sales, and the stock market has tumbled. Frank H. Talbot, executive director of the California Academy of the Arts and Sciences, says, "Whether you're elitist or populist, whether you feel that every person should come in and get something of value or only those who are very well trained and are sensitive to what you're trying to put forth, museums are going into a tough period. There is reduced support from the cities, and not a bit of fat."

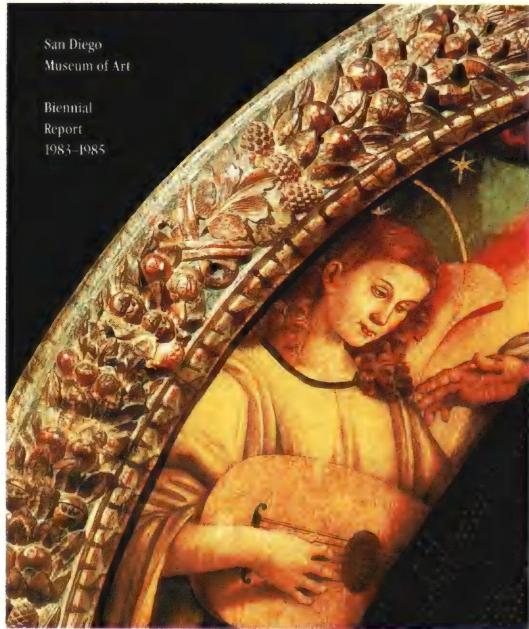
#### Collections Management

One of the shared needs stressed by directors in various fields is in collections management and inventorying collections on a national level. The American Association for State and Local History is the cosponsor of the Common Agenda for History Museums, a project that calls for the standardization of cataloguing and computer systems among history museums. If

**"We know that we're capitalists."**

Peter Neill  
President  
South Street Seaport  
Museum  
New York City

Commerce is the name of the game—and always has been—at New York's South Street Seaport Museum.



the project were to be carried through, according to Lawrence Tise, the association's director, it would encourage sharing of collections: "Sixty to 70 percent of history museums have woodworking tools. In order to understand the history of woodworking in America, it's not necessary to have a complete set of woodworking tools that each institution must keep track of and insure." Tise notes that a similar effort in Canada—the Canadian Heritage Information Network—has been underway for several years and has defined between 500 and 600 categories of objects.

But Harold K. Skramstad, president of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, which has collections of over 27 million objects, doubts that such a plan will help the largest museums. Their history collections are "too diverse, and too many institutions have developed their own nomenclature and systems." He also adds, "Museums have to get a lot more sophisticated in data management."

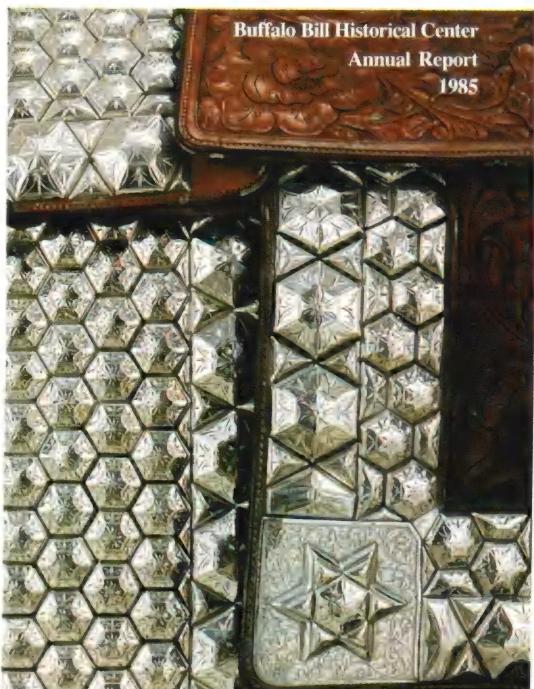
### Conservation

Stuart Frank, director of the Kendall Whaling Museum in Sharon, Massachusetts, notes that maritime museums, which number around 250—though 800 institutions have some kind of maritime collection—are beset by preservation problems. He mentions a windlass his museum recently recovered from a wreck that is "a lump of iron worth \$2,000 that could be restored at a cost of \$30,000 a year over two years. It's not like King Henry VIII's personal sword." Instead of using an expensive process to restore the windlass, Frank says, the Kendall will use a process that could take 10 to 20 years and may not be successful. The benefit

of the exercise, if the restoration does not work, will be in collecting data on the process.

However much money is spent on conservation, there is an increased emphasis on conservation planning. Terry Drayman Weisser, director of conservation at the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, says, "It's sort of the survey era right now." The change in emphasis, from a crisis mentality to a planning one, has been spurred by the Institute for Museum Services (IMS), according to Weisser. In 1987, the IMS provided \$3.2 million for surveys and conservation work. Starting in 1986, Weisser says, IMS started approving funds for general and environmental surveys, which report on the museum's environment and on the collections in general. The following year, the same applicants could request funds for a condition survey, which is more detailed and lists objects one by one. In the third year, applicants could ask for money to conserve specific items.

The change, Weisser says, benefits collections as a whole: "It used to be that popular, pretty things would get conserved, while the other things would not get conserved at all." Theresa Michel, a public information officer with the IMS, says the careful planning is part of an effort to spend federal money wisely. She notes that the priority list for nonliving collections, such as fine and decorative arts museums (survey of collections; survey of environments; the training of museum staff in conservation; research for improved conservation techniques; and, finally, the actual treatment), has parallels in the living and animal collections.



## Ethical Concerns and Deaccessioning

Along with conservation, ethical considerations about collection and deaccessioning have continued to be important, with the latter influenced by the strong art market or a need to focus collections. In the past five years, the Hirshhorn Museum has sold the bulk of its works outside the fields of 19th- and 20th-century art and objects that had been deemed redundant or of secondary quality. The sales were part of an effort to focus the Hirshhorn's collections and have netted about \$3 million, according to James Demetrios, the Hirshhorn's director. The proceeds are used for acquisitions.

The art market's strength over the past year led to the Art Institute of Chicago's selling or offering at auction paintings that were "superfluous or of secondary quality" to other works by the same artist in the museum's collections, according to Richard Brettell, Searle curator of European paintings and sculpture. Brettell said the sales were not out of the ordinary because the AIC has periodically deaccessioned works ever since the institution was founded. Among the paintings sold at auction was Claude Monet's *Nymphéas (Water Lilies)*, which sold at Sotheby's New York last November for \$3.3 million. Unfortunately, the auctions took place following the stock market crash, and several works, including Paul Cézanne's *House on the River*, failed to sell. (The Cézanne was estimated at \$2 million to \$3 million, and bidding reached only \$1.8 million.) Before the sales, Brettell said, the AIC had insisted on high reserves, or minimum acceptable bid prices, in lieu of withdrawing the artworks from the auctions. The reserves, he said, were used to protect the institution from letting the paintings sell for too little.

Ethical considerations are also shaping collections. The Smithsonian's department of anthropology will be returning pillaged human remains to the Blackfeet Indians of Montana, according to Doug Owsley, an associate curator with the department. The remains were pillaged from an active Blackfeet grave site in 1892. The Blackfeet tribe became aware of the remains in 1985, when the Smithsonian sent letters to approximately 225 tribal organizations notifying them of the institution's holdings of skeletal remains from various areas of the country. Owsley says that his department needs to do further research before returning the skulls—Blackfeet tribal representatives, with whom he has been in touch since 1985, requested the additional research to ensure that "only Blackfeet remains were returned.

They did not want a mixing up of the spirits." Owsley says the Smithsonian returns skeletal remains when they were "taken from an active cemetery without permission" or when someone can trace a "direct descendent relationship" to the remains.

The question of ethics is being considered, slowly, by the AAM, which is rewriting its code of ethics. Patterson B. Williams, director of education at the Denver Art Museum and cochair of the AAM's Professional Standards and Practices Committee, says that the AAM's past code of ethics has not provided a mechanism for sanctioning "either a museum or an individual" in cases of ethical wrongdoing, a situation that will need to be corrected in the new code of ethics. Developing such a code—and providing sanctions that give ethics teeth—is difficult, Williams says, because "ethics aren't immutable." In some cases, actions now seen as unethical had previously been both acceptable and commonplace.

One of the issues in ethics that continues to crop up is that of property considered part of a nation's heritage. (Or a people's heritage, as in the case of the Blackfeet Indians.) This summer, the government of Turkey sued the Metropolitan Museum of Art to reclaim allegedly illegally excavated and exported antiquities from the sixth century B.C. The Metropolitan acquired the gold and silver objects, said to be worth \$1.7 million, through gifts and purchases in the 1960s and 1970s, according to Turkey's complaint. The Metropolitan has denied any wrongdoing and is trying to keep the property.

The issue of cultural patrimony was addressed in another way this summer when the United States Information Agency announced prohibitions on the import of pre-Columbian artifacts from the southwestern region of El Salvador (see *Museum News*, January/February 1988). Although the ban was not retroactive, and thus would not have had an effect on Turkey's action against the Metropolitan had there been a similar ban governing Turkish antiquities, it underscored the increasing importance given to ethical, and legal, considerations in the museum world.

In an effort to address a cultural patrimony issue limited to within the boundaries of the United States, the AAM Council, at its January meeting, adopted a policy regarding the repatriation of Native American ceremonial objects and human remains from museum collections. Drafted and recommended to the council by an ad-hoc task force appointed in September 1987 by AAM President Robert Macdonald, the policy presents some prin-

ples to guide museums as they consider requests by Native American groups for repatriation of cultural and human skeletal materials.

### A New Emphasis on Operations

One of the most significant and most commonly discussed shifts in museums is a move toward greater emphasis on operations, funding, and serving the public: in a sense, a move from elitism to populism or, according to critics, from scholarship to management. The shift has been taking place over a number of years but has been gaining momentum, according to virtually all sources. The change is evident in increased development and marketing staffs (or a greater use of consultants), attempts to increase attendance through marketing strategies, more administrative training on all levels, and a slowness of museum boards to appoint new directors for fear of having a scholar who can't raise money for increasingly complex institutions.

Many museum directors praise the shift. They claim that it makes museums more efficient, more responsive to the public's needs, has led to beefed-up educational programming, and has led curators to be more aware of, and involved in, aspects of the museum outside research and scholarship; altogether, a broadening of museums' and their staffs' societal roles that benefits the public.

Critics, however, contend that the emphasis on operations diverts curators' attention from their scholarly and curatorial responsibilities and has led to a lessening of the quality of museum shows. They cite the prominence of entertaining "blockbuster" shows, which may be crowd- and corporation-pleasers but may have little educational value.

The change is seen as far down the line as in museum studies programs. Candace Matelic, director of the Cooperstown graduate program in history museum studies, says that the Cooperstown program has been undergoing

Students enrolled in the Cooperstown Graduate Program in Museum History Studies learn by doing.

adjustments to focus on a broader, more comprehensive approach to understanding all facets of museology: the program is graduating students not only into historical societies and small museums, as in the past, but art museums as well. The program is now focusing on a "museum study core of conservation, museology, and academic studies," and graduates are expected to leave with a grounding in all areas of museum work, including "administration, collections management, education, and research. So if they were going to work as a curator, they would have knowledge and respect for education, and if they're in education, they would have knowledge and respect for administration. . . All those things are necessary, and none is better than any other."

Matelic says that there is also an emphasis on practical skills. Aside from learning to work with computers and audiovisual equipment, she notes that "writing and public speaking are both being emphasized very strongly, popular writing as well as research writing." Students are required to "take a research paper and turn it into a magazine article and other more popular forms of communication."

The training is largely welcomed in the museum community where management-training seminars, another facet of the increasing professionalism among curatorially oriented museum personnel, are becoming more and more common. "I'm afraid to say our profession generally does not recognize the need for training in administrative skills," says Tise, a situation he says is changing. And Wayne Randolph, who is agricultural specialist at Colonial Williamsburg but was speaking as president of the Association for Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM), says, "Overall, we're becoming, and have had to become, more savvy, and running our museums in a more responsible and business-like manner is part of that."

The business-like aspects include reducing





costs through personnel cuts and increasing income, largely by trying to attract more visitors and charging admissions fees, and generating support through development programs. John Wilmerding, deputy director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., notes that until 1978, his institution had only one person in the development office. Since then, the development department has increased its staffing and budget significantly, and in 1983, the gallery created an office for corporate relations.

Another means of adding to endowment revenues is through museum stores. Beverly Barsook, executive director of the Museum Store Association, says that the association had membership growth of 14 percent last year. "More and more museums are opening shops. The growth rate has been good over the past five years, but this year was bigger than ever. [The shops] remain very small businesses generally. The tighter funding gets, the more museums turn to revenue-generating [ventures] to meet the shortfall."

Part of that shortfall comes from increased audience attendance, which in turn makes it easier to get corporate support for exhibitions. The larger the audience—with museums as

with television shows or newspapers—the greater the market that will be receiving a corporation's message: we help enrich your life by supporting this exhibition. (Several museum directors have noted a long-term swing away from corporate philanthropy to corporate support.)

Being able to work with corporations has led to a tendency for museums to become corporate themselves in expression and goals. Randolph says, "To acquire adequate funds [for exhibitions], to meet our goals and ambitions, we need to conduct ourselves in a more business-like manner because we go to corporations for money. They are more sympathetic to another like community than to someone they're not sure is going to use their funds wisely."

Plying the corporate trade, and using the corporate world's methods, has worked well for the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City. Nearly bankrupt two years ago, it has since retired a short-term debt of "several million dollars," according to Peter Neill, president of the museum since 1985. Neill's efforts, noted a colleague who describes him as "the P.T. Barnum of museum directors," included building connections to the city of New York,

Auction in progress at Sotheby's in New York City. In November 1987, Sotheby's sold Vincent van Gogh's *Irises* for a record-breaking \$53.9 million.

commercializing the Seaport, and establishing contacts with Wall Street, which abuts the Seaport area.

The museum is unusual in that it has a 99-year lease, signed in the late 1970s, from New York City on a five-block area. After entering financial partnerships using state, federal, and private money, the museum parcelled out the land among itself and a number of commercial enterprises: together with the South Street Seaport Corporation, the museum is a lessor to over 20 restaurants and fast-food stands and a number of shops that use 270,000 square feet of space.

Neill says some critics view the Seaport as too commercial—the shops and restaurants have more square footage than the museum itself—but contends that the museum is growing and will, in time, outstrip the commercial activity. He says that the balance between museum and commercial activity is simply “a question of scale. People don’t have problems with a museum store or a museum restaurant,” or catalogues or branch stores. He adds, “And the history of South Street was always commerce, and why can’t we acknowledge that?”

Neill also popularized *Seaport Magazine*, which now takes ads and is distributed in Pan Am Shuttle terminals in Washington, New York, and Boston, moves that broaden “our educational mandate.” He adds, “I don’t really think it’s entrepreneurial. I think it’s a commitment... to building audience.” Museums have charters, Neill says, that include educating the public. “For a museum to have an education office of one or two people” and docents and a newsletter isn’t enough. “It should be much, much more aggressive than that. It’s an equally important activity as the curatorial side.”

There are now three exhibits at South Street, a three-fold increase over the years before Neill’s tenure. The growth, Neill says, shows the “normal museum activity” amidst the restaurants and bustle. But even curators are viewed differently; Neill says he views all departments as “profit centers, including curatorial. I also consider every curator part of the development office, so there’s a kind of accountability.... Curators are asked to create and manage their own budgets and argue for them and sustain them.... They get daily [computerized] reports so they know what problems there are, so if they’re heading toward a deficit they can correct.”

The Seaport is far from the only institution that relies on business tools to shore up its health. Robert Wagner, executive director of Oglebay Park and executive director of the American Association of Zoological Parks and

Aquariums, says, “Zoological parks are aware that they must become competitive in the mind of the public. They must catch the public eye for support.” The competition, says Colonial Williamsburg’s Randolph, is for the public’s leisure time. John C. Plynick, president of the Western Railway Museum in Suisun City, California, and president of the Association of Railway Museums, says that public relations is important enough that the only paid professionals doing work for the museum come from an outside public relations firm; all other staff work on a *pro bono* basis.

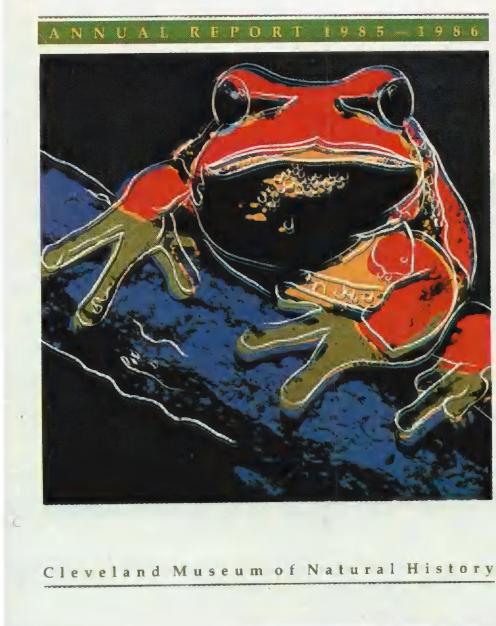
#### **Marketing Surveys and the Blockbuster**

One of the goals of publicity is to generate attendance revenues, and to get visitors through the doors museums are increasingly relying on marketing surveys. The surveys identify the target audience, and institutions then develop, either on their own or through outside agencies, advertising or public relations strategies to appeal to the audience. The audience information also helps institutions tailor their exhibitions and educational programs to suit their visitors. Interest in attracting large audiences and increasing gate receipts was spurred over the last decade, directors say, when they realized the amount of attendance income that can come from special, or so-called blockbuster, exhibitions.

One of the benefits of targeted exhibitions, according to Douglas R. Noble, chairman of the Memphis Park Commission, which oversees several cultural institutions, is that they “make museums more responsive to the public at large,” a great benefit, he says, because museums have become “more accountable to the public they serve.” As Randolph, like many others, says, “Museums are no longer the small community attic and curiosity houses that they were not too long ago.”

On the downside, “There is a pitfall, and that is of always trying to please the public,” according to Noble. Though “as long as you’re not prostituting yourself just to get people running through the museum, or [in a situation] where the content and purpose [of the exhibition] are of questionable quality,” a director is only helping the museum.

While other directors expressed concern at compromising their museums’ missions as well, most view the popular, blockbuster exhibitions as educational but with a high gloss. Roger Mandel, director of the Toledo Museum of Art, says that although there may be some lowering of standards in the educational quality of exhibitions, more often “directors are using more enlightened methods of getting



Cleveland Museum of Natural History

their messages across. You could cite isolated examples of poor judgment, but that's not an industry trend," Neill says. "Museums must be an attraction. . . . Disney is entertainment [because] it's a shallow level of substance. There's nothing wrong with that at all, but a museum should want to have exhibitions with a much deeper level of substance." Neill says he is fully committed to building audiences, which he terms "the single most important problem that we have in the museum community—unwillingness to acknowledge responsibilities to our audience, which should be as big and as broad as possible."

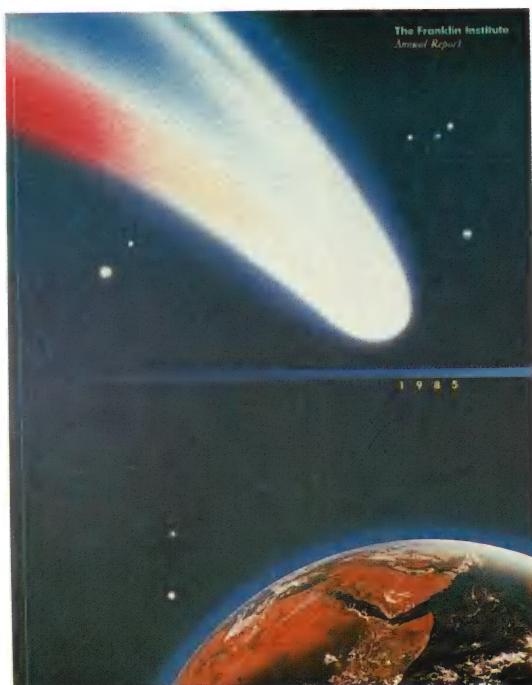
But large, high-gloss, audience-broadening and revenue-generating special exhibitions present another drawback, according to Wilson. "Special exhibitions are very important and a component of institutional life. On the whole they're good, but they've simply gotten out of control." The reliance on the exhibitions for revenues, Wilson says, undermines the importance of museums' permanent collections, which he says are, or should be, the cores of all museums.

Art museums may be facing limits on special exhibitions. Wilmerding said that insurance and indemnification costs, which have risen as dramatically as the prices of art, may make special exhibitions of high-valued works prohibitively expensive. But the scenario "isn't all doom and gloom. I do think that we may have gotten into. . . doing—I won't say the easy exhibitions, but the ones that have an obvious built-in glamour of major name status. We're doing them because they presumably have some scholarly benefit and their subjects are

artists who haven't been looked at for some time." Increases in the art's value, and the concomitant costs of insurance and indemnification, Wilmerding says, will "force everybody to be a little more inventive and ingenious in what areas of art we turn to [for exhibitions] and be a little bit more creative in digging out those areas that may not be as value-laden but are every bit as interesting in terms of public interest and bring something to the fore." Wilmerding adds that the innovations can take a number of forms, "whether it's using permanent collections more creatively or looking at areas other than the most breathlessly fashionable stuff on the market."

#### Director Vacancies

The increase in business orientation affects museum directors as well. With the increasing complexity of museums and the roles of directors who must be both connoisseurs and masters of the balance sheet, major art museums have been having a difficult time filling directorships. At a panel discussion last October that was sponsored by the Art Dealers Association of America, Robert T. Buck, director of the Brooklyn Museum, listed the roles that museums directors now must play: art historian, curator, connoisseur, educator, part-time psychiatrist, critic, executive, labor negotiator, diplomat, insurance manager, shop manager, restaurateur, personnel manager, raconteur, community leader, "and, in some cases, architect and zoning expert," as well as a person familiar with art and tax laws and with planned giving.



The number of directorships open at art museums peaked at 24 in January 1987 and didn't drop below 17 during the year, according to Millicent Gaudieri, director of the Association of Art Museum Directors. One of the reasons for the high percentage of openings—Gaudieri says the AAMD has averaged about 15 to 18 openings during the past two years—is the complexity of a director's job. "If corporation heads had to do everything we have to do," Gaudieri says, "they wouldn't do their jobs, either."

Gaudieri adds that while the number of openings has not increased drastically over the past few years, it now takes museum boards nine to 10 months to fill the slots.

Other reasons for the openings, according

to Wilmerding, include a "generational transition which began with the retirement, about 10 years ago, of prominent directors like Sherman Lee and Otto Wittmann," who had not groomed a middle echelon of deputies to take over. Wilmerding and Tracy Atkinson, the recently retired director of the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, have received a grant to study the question. Wilmerding notes that "local circumstances often have created many of the vacancies," including conservative, out-of-date boards that are narrow-minded or not well balanced, or positions at museums that "haven't worked out tables of operations."

Aside from major art museums, the turnover is not especially high. Douglas Noble's 1987

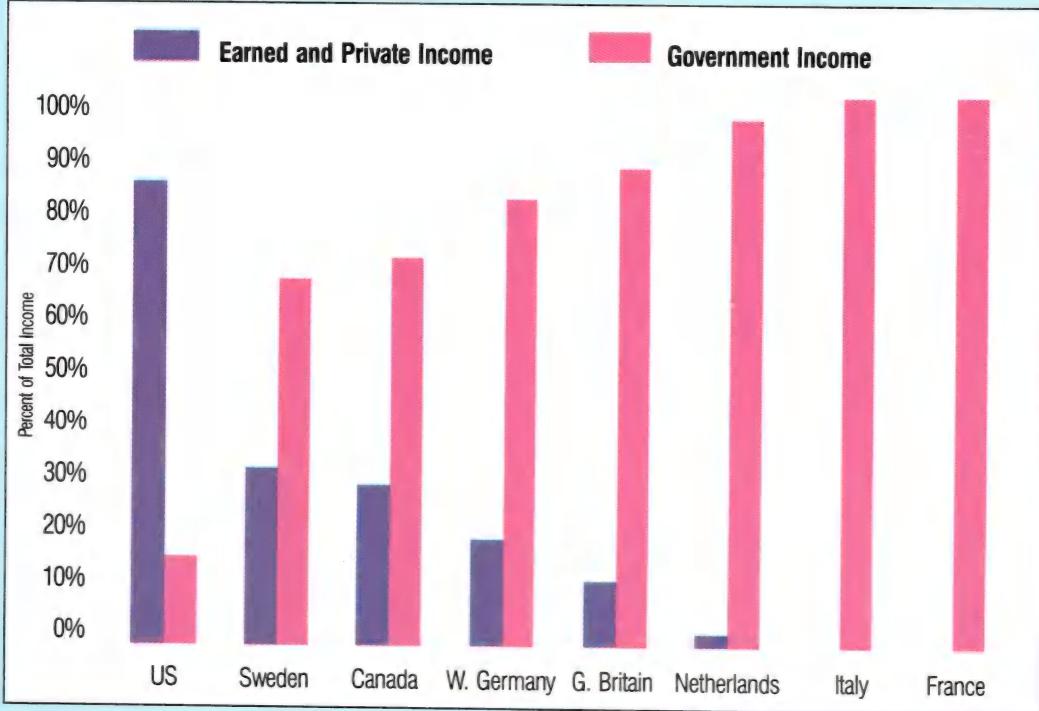
## International Comparison of Art Museum Support

As part of the 1985 study by Mark D. Schuster, *Supporting the Arts: An International Comparative Study*, the distribution of income sources of 32 arts institutions from eight different countries was compared. From this microlevel, the institutions form three groups reflective of their countries' funding practices: the American institutions, characterized by very high levels of earned income and private donations and correspondingly low levels of government support; the Canadian and British institu-

tions with moderate levels of earned income and some private donations; and the institutions from the remaining five countries with very high levels of government subsidy. The eight art museums included in the sample reflect this overall pattern except that the Swedish and West German museums show a level of private support atypical of their countries.

The following graph illustrates the funding profile for eight museums on a country-by-country basis in fiscal 1984.

One selected institution per country: United States, Art Institute of Chicago; Sweden, Moderna Museet; Canada, Vancouver Art Gallery; West Germany, Bavarian State Art Collection; Great Britain, Tate Gallery; Netherlands, Stedelijk Museum; Italy, Civiche Raccolte Milanesi; France, Musée National d'Art Moderne.



thesis, "An Exploratory Study of Turnover Among Museum Directors and Some Implications for Innovation," said that the average length of service among museum directors, between 1977 and 1987, was seven years. He adds that the rate of turnover, calculated through statistical formulas, is lower than for other professional groups but is higher than among "managers, officials, and proprietors."

Regarding administrative ability, Noble noted that science museum boards often hire a president, who works on long-range planning and is visible to donors, while directors are more operations-oriented.

### Museum Boards

Just as the requirements of directors have changed, so have some museum boards. Thomas A. Livesay, director of the Museum of New Mexico, says directors are facing boards "that are demanding more and more in a business-like fashion, [it] is a wrath that museums have brought on themselves, and it's to the good. So many directors are ill-equipped to handle the multitude of changes in the museum field. The museum is not the quaint little repository it was 20 to 30 years ago. It's a hustle-bustle business."

But Wilson contends that boards are more concerned with publicity and profit than with building important collections. He agrees that museums must be run efficiently, but says that boards are increasingly composed of businessmen who "are there more for status than anything else." These boards encourage unwieldy, top-heavy administrations in museums, often wanting to establish organizational tables like those of banks. Wilson says, "The business of an art museum is art, and it is not measured by the bottom line. It cannot be reduced to a table of financial figures that can be skimmed in five minutes." A museum's bottom line, he says, should not be its financial statement "but the quality and scope of the collections on display and the programs that are instituted."

The problem, as Wilson sees it, is that some museums tend to develop a skewed sense of priorities and become dependent on moving people through the halls while neglecting their primary purposes.

Harry Parker, director of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and until mid-1987 director of the Dallas Museum of Art, however, says his museum's "immediate priority is balancing our budget," which has suffered in the past five years from declining public support and government and grant money in real dollars, despite increasing membership, and shop and restaurant income. He mentions increased sala-

### AVERAGE STAFF SIZE OF MUSEUMS

STATISTICAL SUMMARY COMPILED BY THE OFFICIAL MUSEUM DIRECTORY SURVEY

Total Number of Museums	6,598	
Number of Museums Reporting	3,164	48.0%
Volunteers Only	241	7.6%
Part-time Only	346	10.9%
Full-time Staff	2,577	81.4%
Number of Employees:		
1	476	18.5%
2-3	1,098	42.6%
4-10	511	19.8%
11-20	197	7.6%
20-50	166	6.4%
Over 50	129	5.0%

This data was compiled from a survey conducted in conjunction with the publication of the 1988 Official Museum Directory.

ries, insurance costs, and professional fees—lawyers, accountants, direct-mail advisors—as stumbling blocks to a balanced budget. The Nelson-Atkins, with an endowment of \$58 million, is more fortunate.

But while museums that rely heavily on government support—the Louisiana State Museum, which has had significant lay-offs in the past two years, as well as San Francisco's and Milwaukee's—are dearly struggling to balance their budgets, other museums are tightening their belts, also. Crawford Lincoln, president of Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts, says, "We're cutting back on some aspects of our marketing that we don't feel have contributed as much as they should have, notably the electronic media where we haven't gotten the return per dollar that we'd like to see." Lincoln adds that Sturbridge may cut back its hours of operations. "There is very little slack. . . . No one is living in fat city these days."

Despite a sense of wealth at some institutions, and despite the amount of construction and the ever more ambitious programs, museums, as always, need more money. Their needs grow to consume the money they have and contract to fit the shortfalls. But the recent growth and refinements indicate a strong nationwide interest in entertainingly educational institutions. Parker says, "I wouldn't be surprised if the mid-1980s will be perceived as a great period for museums." He cites the proliferation of museum wings, physical expansion, and dramatic increases in operating budgets and attendance. Parker adds, "I wouldn't be surprised if there isn't a shake-out." His prognosis may be wrong, but his concern is hardly unique. □

# Meltdowns, Massacres,

*As the Stock Market Goes, How Go Museums?*

By Anne Lowrey Bailey

**O**ctober's stock-market plunge shook museum officials across the country and sent them scurrying to compensate for potential losses in income from private gifts and endowment.

Museum officials said that the market's meltdown had slowed year-end giving and gifts of securities, and, for museums dependent on endowment income, had forced some hiring freezes and other economy measures.

Experts predicted that giving to museums might drop as much as 10 percent, but that the stock market's drop would not have a disastrous effect on museums.

"We are very concerned, since many of our gifts, especially the large ones, come in the form of appreciated stocks," said Salvatore Cilella, director of the Columbia Museum in South Carolina. "That is where the crunch will come."

"We were working hard before, but now we're working even harder in order to make up for rough times," noted Thomas J. Sanders, vice-president of development for the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, which is finishing up a capital drive that raised \$42.2 million.

Museums with endowments faced some immediate challenges. At the J. Paul Getty Museum and Trust, the endowment only sank from \$3.1 billion to \$2.9 billion, because the museum had sold most of its stock before the market's nosedive. Still, the drop was sudden enough to cause the museum to impose a two-month hiring freeze and "to do some fine-tuning on the expense side," according to Joseph Kearns, the trust's vice-president and treasurer.

A 10-percent drop in the \$60-million endowment of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City has led officials there also to delay filling staff vacancies. "We'll have to replace that endowment income with new gifts or retrench in our budget," said Michael S. Churchman, director of development.

Churchman fears that the effects of the stock market's drop may be felt especially early within the museum's business council, which was created in 1986 with 127 corporate members and annual dues of \$2,500. He said that membership renewals have been coming

more slowly than expected for that group, and that the museum "isn't making wonderful progress" in recruiting new members, either.

As a result of these factors, the Nelson-Atkins has put off plans to raise the prices of its membership levels.

Most individual donors were unwilling to discuss the ways the stock market had affected their philanthropic plans. But a major patron of the San Diego Zoo, Joan E. Kroc, whose late husband built the McDonald's hamburger chain, was reported by the *Los Angeles Times* to have lost \$200 million in the crash.

And James Forbes, deputy director for development of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, said one of his major donors had indicated she would not be able to give as in the past because of her stock-market losses. "We think that uncertainty about what the market will do next is affecting giving more than what the market has done already," he said.

Many officials said their fund-raising efforts have not yet been affected by the market's drop. "The new tax law and the market crash will both have an impact on us," said Robert R. Macdonald, director of the Museum of the City of New York and president of AAM. "But it's too early to tell just what that impact will be."

"We don't feel an impending sense of doom," said Margaret M. Maxwell, director of development for the Children's Museum of Indianapolis.

While Maxwell acknowledged that the museum was receiving far fewer gifts of stocks at the end of 1987 than it had at the end of 1986, she noted that last year her museum raised \$12 million toward a two-year, \$13-million capital campaign goal.

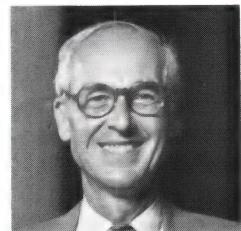
In November, just two weeks after the market's drop, the Metropolitan Museum of Art even managed to get a \$10 million gift from a Wall Street financier. Henry R. Kravis pledged the money to help complete a \$51-million, five-story wing that is the last major component of the museum's master expansion plan.

Experts estimate it may take as long as a year for the market's drop to percolate through the economy and affect individual, foundation, and corporate giving to museums.

# *and Mergers*



According to Getty Trust Treasurer Kearns, the Getty Museum is curbing expenses. Pictured is the main peristyle garden with museum facade.



Development Director Churchman reports that the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art is feeling the pinch, too. Pictured is the museum's south facade.

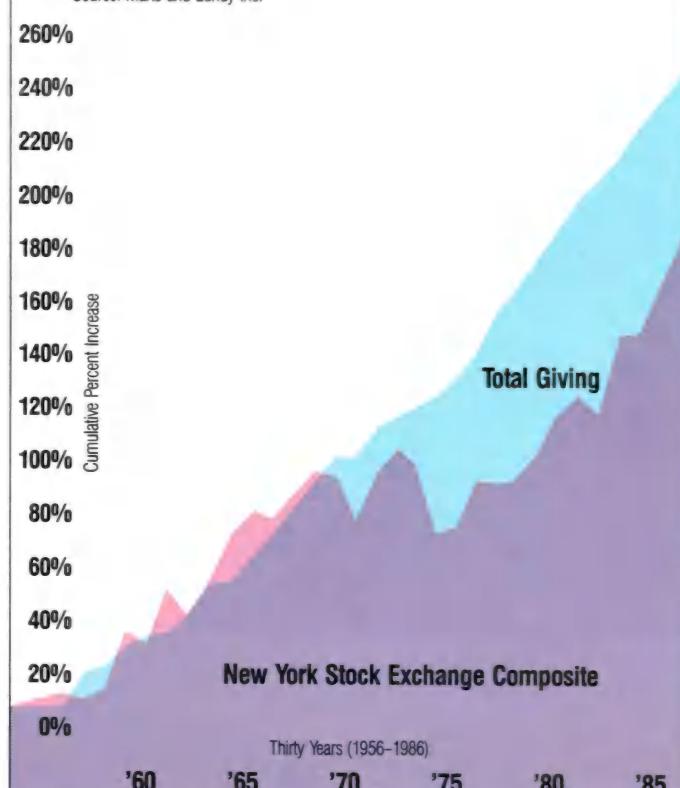
## CORPORATE GIVING RELATED TO CORPORATE PROFITS

Source: Marts and Lundy Inc.



## NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE COMPOSITE RELATED TO TOTAL GIVING

Source: Marts and Lundy Inc.



Lawrence B. Lindsey, a Harvard University economist who studies giving patterns, analyzed giving patterns to all charities in the six years since 1960 in which the market dropped by more than 20 percent. He found that in each instance, giving actually went up during hard times.

However, in the case of very wealthy donors—those most likely to give large amounts to museums—the news may not be so good, Lindsey said. The market's plunge would hurt

top-income donors twice as much as other individuals, he said, and predicted that gifts from that group would drop by 10 percent.

Giving to museums also could be affected by what some economists call the "soup kitchen effect"—the tendency of donors to give more to relief efforts during hard times.

B. Burr Gibson, chairman of a large fund-raising consulting firm, said that giving from individuals correlates most closely with growth in personal disposable income (see chart). He predicted that Black Monday would do no more than slow growth in gifts from individuals. However, he predicted that giving from corporations and foundations will drop, since their contributions budgets do follow the market.

Despite the financial uncertainty, most officials said they had no plans to delay capital campaigns or change their fund-raising strategies as a result of the stock market's drop.

"We must move as confidently and aggressively as ever, or we'll find ourselves beaten," said Edith H. Falk of Donald A. Campbell and Co. Inc., a fund-raising consulting firm that advises several major museum campaigns. But, she joked, "On the other hand, I wouldn't hold a major event for Wall Street bankers and stockbrokers right now, either." □

### HOW DECLINES IN STOCK MARKET HAVE Affected PERSONAL GIVING

Decline in Market	Decline in Personal Wealth	Change in Personal Income	Inflation Rate	Change in Giving
<b>1962</b>	-26.5%	-7.0%	+ 6.2%	+ 1.6%
<b>1966</b>	-22.3	-6.1	+ 8.8	+ 2.9
<b>1970</b>	-25.9	-6.4	+ 7.1	+ 5.9
<b>1973</b>	-23.4	-5.6	+ 12.0	+ 6.2
<b>1974</b>	-37.6	-6.6	+ 9.7	+ 11.0
<b>1987</b>	-33.3	-7.0	+ 7.0*	+ 4.0*

\*Estimate  
n.a.: not available

Source: Lawrence B. Lindsey, Harvard University

## When a Museum Is Held Hostage

They call it the Wednesday Morning Massacre.

The event in question began when the Milwaukee County Board Finance Committee held a seemingly ordinary session in October 1986 to resolve the budget of the Milwaukee Public Museum.

But by the time the meeting was over, the county board members had voted to hold hostage one-fourth of the salaries of the museum's three top officials.

The county would pay the salaries after October 1, 1987, if the museum officials could show the board they had achieved a significant increase in revenues from private sources.

"That's a real challenge," one of the supervisors said, according to an article in the *Milwaukee Journal*. "If they want their jobs they will have to raise that revenue."

"That would be the first revenue they raise," said another, and the committee members were reported to have laughed.

County officials probably aren't laughing anymore. Although the museum's directors did succeed in raising annual earned income to \$1.4 million in 1987—double what the museum earned in 1984 and triple its 1980 level—that goal has been achieved at a terrible price.

Since the public humiliation of the Wednesday Morning Massacre, the museum's three top officials and a number of curatorial staff members have resigned, as have the directors of the Milwaukee zoo and parks.

At issue is the extent to which public museums can increase the portion of private support within their budgets without compromising their educational missions.

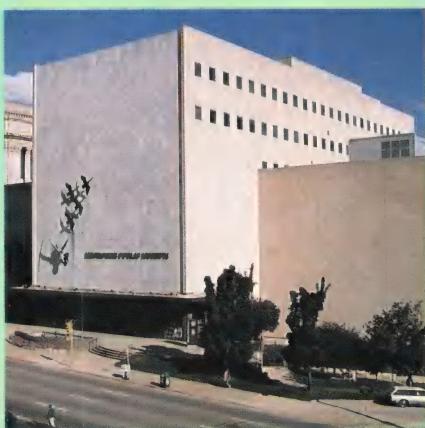
Tensions had been escalating between the county and the museum for some time before the Wednesday Morning Massacre occurred.

County executives have been eager to reduce the burden placed on county taxpayers by the museum. For example, supervisors have proposed eliminating county support for the museum's scientific program, as a

means of pressuring the museum to shift that financial burden to other governmental agencies, such as the University of Wisconsin system.

They have also suggested selling state lottery tickets at the museum.

If an editorial in the *Milwaukee Journal* denounced the lottery proposal as "rank and offensive," the fiscal problems underlying such suggestions are nonetheless real. Milwau-



County executives proposed selling lottery tickets at the beleaguered Milwaukee Public Museum.

kee's core industries are hemorrhaging as a result of international competition. The city's population is dropping: Milwaukee has slipped from the nation's 12th- to 18th-largest city over the past dozen years. Milwaukee's increasingly poor population has become progressively less able to care for what is ranked as one of the nation's five or six top natural and cultural history museums.

Because the city has been losing its tax base, the museum's ownership in 1975 transferred from city to county. But the county has faced rising pressures to pay for the city's general, medical, and educational needs in addition to supporting the museum.

The museum also has been deeply affected by federal and state budget cuts. On the other hand, M. Kenneth Starr, the museum's former director, has resisted what he calls "pressure to become Disneyland, to carnivalize, to become a theme park."

"We want excitement without sell-

ing souls," he says.

Underlying these conflicts is the museum's duplicative governance structure, which is geared to public, rather than private, support. Starr must contend with three governing boards: the county board, the museum's trustees, and the Friends of the Museum, a volunteer group that has stoutly resisted pressures to raise money for the museum's endowment, programs, or capital needs. "Each board has its own agenda," he says. "It's like working in a bowl of oatmeal."

Since the "massacre," the museum has worked even harder on its marketing efforts. Admission revenues in 1987 rose 50 percent to \$850,000, due to higher fees and attendance. The museum has begun charging fees for children's classes at the museum and in Milwaukee schools, and for loans of films and other audiovisual materials. The Friends of the Museum group has provided \$150,000 to hire a marketing director and fund raiser, but its offices still resist the creation of an endowment. An endowment, they fear, will allow the county to back out of paying for basic operating expenses and thus would detract from efforts to raise money for programs.

Still, the museum is clearly at a crossroads. Word of the Wednesday Morning Massacre has spread through the museum world. As a result, Milwaukee may have trouble attracting a highly qualified director. And until recently, the search committee did not include a museum professional.

The museum's staff has been officially cut by three but 20 vacancies have gone unfilled for several years, due to a county-imposed hiring moratorium.

Despite these efforts, in 1988 the county expects the museum to bring in \$800,000 more in private revenues than it did in 1987, a feat that Thomas Fifield, president of the museum's board, called "virtually impossible."

Says Starr: "No matter how hard we try, each year we are pressed to do more. We have gone as far as we can go." □

## *The High Cost of a Permanent Loan*

**F**or Henry Flood Robert, corporate "merger mania" has spelled a curator's crisis.

At stake for the director of Omaha's Joslyn Museum of Art are three outstanding collections of art of the American West. Those collections, valued at \$28.8 million, have been on "permanent loan" to the museum from the Internorth Corporation since the mid-1960s.

The permanence of that loan evaporated in 1986, when Internorth's management was taken over by the Houston Natural Gas Co., its name changed to Enron, and the restructured company's headquarters transferred to Texas.

The departure of the corporation's top officers ended decades of magnanimous support by Internorth for the Joslyn. "The new corporate officers live in Houston. There's no reason why they should care about Nebraska, or the history and art of this region," said one observer.

Enron has tried hard to be generous, given its new situation. It has converted the most important of the three collections, valued at \$14 million, into an outright gift to the museum. Robert says the Maximilian-Bodmer collection comprises a "unique and irreplaceable" group of paintings by Carl Bodmer of early expeditions up the Platte River that are important to the art and history of Nebraska and the Great Plains region.

But Enron's new officers feel they must sell the remaining two collections for their fair market value.

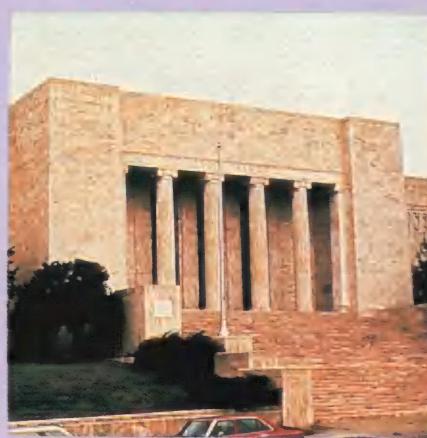
That has put pressure on Robert to raise funds to retain the very collections that have long made the Joslyn a cultural jewel of its region.

"We have learned there's nothing permanent about a permanent loan," says Robert sadly. He adds: "Museums ought to be converting permanent loans into outright gifts as quickly as possible."

The museum's trustees have until February 15 to raise the \$4.4 million in gifts and pledges needed to secure the Alfred Jacob Miller collection, considered the finest group of

sketches and paintings by the artist of expeditions up the Missouri River. Because Miller painted at about the same time as Bodmer, the group naturally complements the first collection. The Miller paintings, too, are considered irreplaceable parts of the region's cultural heritage.

But the museum has given up almost all hope of retaining the third collection, Artists of the Western



The Joslyn: in jeopardy of losing valued collections?

Frontier, which includes paintings by 37 artists that range from Remington to Russell, valued at \$8.8 million. The corporation now is accepting sealed bids for that collection, with a minimum bid of \$5 million.

Internorth's metamorphosis has had other implications for the Joslyn as well. In 1979, the corporation had established the Internorth Art Foundation with a \$1.7-million grant, to be paid over 10 years. That endowment created the Joslyn's Center for Western Studies and four curatorial positions to enable scholars from around the world to visit and study the Western art collections.

Now, once the collections are sold and the endowment expires at the end of next year, that fund, now the Enron Art Foundation, will quietly cease to exist.

The Internorth Foundation itself, now rechristened the Enron Omaha Foundation, has undergone stringent cutbacks. This year it expects to

award \$1 million in grants, down from a peak of \$3.3 million in 1985. While Enron Omaha continues to have a warm relationship with the Joslyn, its grant-making powers are nonetheless severely curtailed.

Robert is encountering mixed success in his efforts to develop new sources of support. He has restructured his board of trustees with eight prominent corporate chief executive officers and an important philanthropist in the region in an effort to build much-needed fund-raising clout.

But the new board took an unexpected turn at its November meeting when it decided to consolidate six museum positions into three, including that of the director of development and the director of public affairs.

The museum will raise money, the board decided, according to the example set by the Omaha Zoo, which has garnered millions through a successful membership campaign.

The problem, fund-raising experts say, is that the zoo has 151,000 members and the museum, 5,000. "Unfortunately, it's totally unrealistic to think the museum can raise the money it needs using the zoo's methods," says Arthur C. Frantzreb, a fund-raising consultant who has advised the museum in the past. "The two institutions are just different critters. And the sad thing is, the money is there, in Omaha, to be raised. It's very private, very conservative money, but it's there."

Finally, the state's own economic problems, caused by the farm crisis, also are aggravating the Joslyn's financial problems. State auditors recently reinterpreted ambiguous language in its 1969 sale and use tax law to impose the 5.5-percent tax on the state's non-profit organizations. As a result, the Joslyn has been forced to pay the state \$35,000 in back taxes, penalties, and interest. It will also have to pay a sales tax if it buys the Miller collection, bringing the final price to almost \$4.7 million.

"We are getting munched!" says Robert, laughing a little hysterically. "Munched! Munched!" □

# Museums: Twenty Minutes into the Future

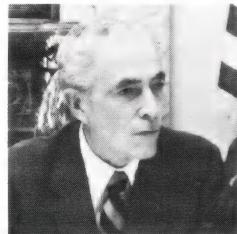
**W**hen *Museum News* convened its second round table discussion on "Museums: 20 Minutes into the Future," participants met on Capitol Hill in a hearing room arranged through the offices of round table participant Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI). Joining the senator to discuss what the immediate future holds for America's museums were Ellsworth Brown, president and director of the Chicago Historical Society; Linda Bantel, museum director for the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia; and Martin Harwitt, director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington. American Association of Museums President Robert Macdonald moderated the discussion.

**Robert Macdonald:** A few years ago there was a Commission on Museums for a New Century, which looked ahead fifteen or twenty years. This morning we'd like to look ahead to the next six or 12 months to determine what issues are on the front burner for America's museums. Martin, what is your view?

**Martin Harwitt:** All science and technology museums have a dual responsibility: first, to educate the public about the historical development of technologies and their impact on our lives, and second, to show the scientific and technical principles that underly the operation of the equipment on exhibit. Some museums stress principles, others history. No two museums are exactly alike. All museums, however, share the responsibility of public education, a need that has become increasingly important. Recent counts show that roughly half of the Ph.D.s awarded in technological areas in this country go to students from abroad. This suggests a lack of awareness by the American public of technology's role in our cultural heritage and standard of living.

**Macdonald:** One challenge is interpreting the history of science and technology.

**Harwitt:** Yes, and in order to provide this service, museums have to grow. As long as



**"Personally, I think there's no reason in the world why museums shouldn't charge reasonable admission fees, and I think that this would not have a substantial negative effect on attendance."**

Sen. Claiborne Pell  
(D-R.I.)

science and technology advance as rapidly as they have in the past, a science museum that doesn't grow quickly loses its importance to the public. It cannot fulfill its educational role. Such growth requires adequate funding. We have to construct buildings because there are more items to exhibit, and many of the artifacts are much larger than they used to be. The tax laws must provide adequate incentives for individuals as well as for corporate donors. This is probably the single most important way in which government can aid museums right now.

**Macdonald:** Senator Pell, what are the challenges you see for America's museums in the near term?

**Sen. Claiborne Pell:** I see the challenges from a legislative viewpoint—having worked with the arts and humanities endowments since their establishment—and as a former director of a museum, Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain in New York. Funding is always the big question. No matter how much money is available, a museum always wants a little more—and this is perfectly understandable.

It is true that the tax laws probably do not give the same encouragement to private donations as they did before. On the other hand, we should remember that ours is the only country in the world where gifts to museums and private charities have been deductible from one's income. Since many museums in the world are certainly the equal of our own, we should bear in mind that there is more than one way to sustain a fine museum operation.

One of the most critical short-term problems facing museums is the need for better conservation of collections. I also know from my work with the World Monuments Fund how important it is that countries share knowledge about the preservation of our international architectural heritage.

Another museum issue is certainly the salaries paid to professional staff. For example, I believe these salaries are generally lower than those paid to teachers with the equivalent amount of education.

**Macdonald:** Do you see any possibility for review of the tax law as it relates to individual giving?

**Pell:** In all candor, there appears to be little prospect that the Congress will restore previous tax treatment of two items that are of particular concern to the museum community: the deductibility of appreciated property and the deduction of charitable gifts by those who do not otherwise itemize deductions. The rationale, after all, for the overall Tax Reform Act of 1986 was that deductions and credits would be reduced in exchange for lower marginal tax rates. I think that there remains a strong reluctance to reverse that course and begin to restore the deductions and credits that were limited, reduced, or eliminated in 1986.

This reluctance on the part of the Congress is strengthened by the continuing problem of our federal budget deficit. Provisions that would lose revenue and worsen the deficit are unlikely to be viewed with favor right now. At a minimum, sponsors would have to come up with an offsetting source of new revenue.

**Harwitt:** Senator, you raise a number of important points, including that of the salaries of museum scholars. The Smithsonian has just completed a study that identifies exactly the same problem. The second is preservation, and the Smithsonian is now trying to hire a conservator. But we also need to conduct research in order to conserve these artifacts—many of them, particularly in technology, are of entirely new materials—like Teflon, where we have no long-term conservation experience. Research is expensive, and the Smithsonian does not charge admission. In a time of constant budgets, we therefore depend on the public to provide us with funding. And I think the only place where we actually have an option then of raising the money for those salaries, for that conservation and preservation, is by public donations.

**Pell:** Personally, I think there's no reason in the world why museums shouldn't charge reasonable admission fees, and I think that this would not have a substantial negative effect on attendance.

**Macdonald:** Ellsworth, what do you see as the major museum-related issue this year?

**Ellsworth Brown:** It seems to me that there is an increasing pressure in this country for professionalism in museums. And mostly we see it in conservation, which is not just a question of professionalism, but of saving stuff. It also has to do with the kinds of exhibitions we mount, the marketing we do, and the kinds of educational programs we run. It isn't just that we



**"Over the last several years, it has struck me that the major challenge facing us is that of the governance of our institutions."**

Robert Macdonald  
President  
American Association of  
Museums



**"The difficulties that we face are in part the result of a lack of focus and a lack of specialty."**

Ellsworth Brown  
President and Director  
Chicago Historical  
Society

need more money; it's that there are other things driving those needs rather than just expansionism or wanting more staff or brighter exhibitions.

**Macdonald:** Is there a feeling that museums are going to become so desperate to maintain their current level of operation that their search for money begins to cloud their judgment, their sense of mission to take care of their collections?

**Harwitt:** Certainly in our technology museums that's the case. When we mount an exhibition we usually look around for a donor or two. I've come in and inherited a number of exhibitions that are going to go up in the next few years which are already partially completed and which probably should not be stopped because donors have invested quite a lot of money in them, but which we have, to some extent, lost intellectual control of. And in our case it's not always to a corporation; it can be, for example, a government agency that would like to publicize an important contribution to aerospace technology, or aerospace ventures, where we don't really ask the important questions about the current impact of those technologies, of those developments, on what we are actually doing.

**Macdonald:** What about the pressures in maintaining the current level of operation? Over the last several years, it has struck me that the major challenge facing us is that of the governance of our institutions. How do we ensure that our boards are reflective of the institution, of the community's needs?

**Linda Bantel:** The challenge, at least from my point of view, is to bring the board and the staff together toward a common goal. That's difficult when boards are made up of volunteers who, no matter how well intentioned, often attend only board meetings and perhaps a very limited number of other committee meetings. And so part of our challenge is to educate them, to keep them aware of the changing needs of the visiting public and the ways the professional staff is trying to respond.

**Brown:** Your political eyesight is far better than mine, Senator. Do you see anything like a cultural agenda within the presidential race?

**Pell:** No, not at the present time, and I regret this very much indeed. I think back to the previous presidents—many of whom had significant agendas for the arts. Johnson, Carter, and Nixon all made it very plain that they endorsed the work of the endowments. Johnson signed the legislation establishing them in 1965; Nixon appointed a strong advocate for the arts, Nancy Hanks, and supported budget

increases; Carter had Joan Mondale and Livingstone Biddle—both passionate advocates for culture.

**Brown:** Is it too late, or is there any way to inject this into the campaign?

**Pell:** No, it is not too late—the election is still a year away. But, I cannot stress enough how much the future of our federal cultural agencies will depend on the unequivocal support of the next president. As I have said already, it was very clear where each one stood up until 1980. Now, after seven rather listless years, it is doubly critical to have a candidate with clearly articulated views on the future of federal support for culture.

**Macdonald:** The scrutiny currently being given by the House, and that later will be taken up by the Senate, regarding revenue-producing activities of nonprofits and the UBIT (Unrelated-Business Income Tax) is causing great unrest in the tax-exempt community. This comes just as institutions, such as museums, have increased their earned income activities to compensate for flat federal support. Do you foresee legislation resulting in more taxation of nonprofits' earned income getting anywhere in 1988?

**Pell:** First we must remember we are in a situation in which the tax-writing committees of the House and Senate are looking for every possible way to increase revenue without raising tax rates for individuals or corporations. Under the compromise deficit reduction plan, the Congress must find \$11 billion in new revenue for this fiscal year and another \$17 billion for FY 1989.

Given that requirement, I would not be at all surprised if the operations of nonprofit organizations came under scrutiny as possible sources for new federal revenue—and the business, revenue-raising operations of nonprofit organizations could very well be a target of the tax-writing committees.

In some instances, as you know, the unrelated business activities of nonprofit organizations have aroused antagonism from for-profit businesses, which view the nonprofit operations as unfair competition. That antagonism could lead Congress to tighten taxes on the business functions of nonprofits.

My advice would be that nonprofits should keep their revenue-raising, business-like activities within reasonable bounds, and avoid direct competition with for-profit businesses. When it comes to tax policy, it's always best to have few enemies and many friends.

**Macdonald:** The crisis in leadership in museums today—we have a good number of major art museums without directors at this point—



**"As long as science and technology advance as rapidly as they have in the past, a science museum that doesn't grow quickly loses its importance to the public."**

Martin Harwitt  
Director  
National Air and Space  
Museum



**"... [A]rt museums are perceived as very social places and there's tremendous pressure to perform, to have frequent large exhibitions, to have splendid social gatherings."**

Linda Bantel  
Museum Director  
Pennsylvania Academy of  
the Fine Arts

arises in many cases because of misunderstandings between the chief executive officer and the governing board.

**Brown:** Why is it chiefly in art museums?

**Macdonald:** Much more pressure is placed on art museum directors.

**Bantel:** I think you're right. I don't know about historical societies, but art museums are perceived as very social places and there's tremendous pressure to perform, to have frequent large exhibitions, to have splendid social gatherings. Museum directors are usually promoted to those positions partly because of some sort of scholarly achievement. And they are expected to maintain that scholarly achievement; yet at the same time they're supposed to create social extravaganzas and balance budgets. They also have to preserve intellectual continuity, direct educational programs, and make sure that they are creating collections that will be valid in the future.

**Brown:** I'd like to go back to something that was brought up about the difficulty of maintaining the status quo. I would posit that maybe we ought not try any more to maintain the status quo and that maybe our problem is in trying to do so. Every time we talk we list a range of demands—education, collecting, social status. The difficulties that we face are in part the result of a lack of focus and a lack of specialty. If we indeed were willing as individual institutions to pick one or two things we could do well instead of four or five things we don't do easily any more, we would be much more successful. We would find that we have a niche, that our public appeal might be more focused, and perhaps more easily achieved. We would find that pressures on us are somewhat less than they would otherwise be. Maybe what's wrong is the status quo.

**Harwitt:** When you look back at the last year, the two short-term developments that will have the greatest impact are the change in the tax law and the October stock-market crash. Both will have an immediate effect on how we go about bringing in the funding that we depend on. That is going to be the major problem in the next couple of years.

**Macdonald:** Being an optimist, I'd like to think that museums can target the many under-served audiences out there. I don't mean necessarily serve them at a profit—unless that profit is to fulfill our mission. If we can figure out how to serve those groups and still stay true to our institutional goals, then I think we'll somehow escape this dark cloud. We'll be able to go through these difficult times intact—and still retain the respect of the wider community. □

# Designer Boulders and

## Museums' High Cost of Doing Business

By Lorraine Glennon

**S**omething more than inflation is at work in the wildly escalating costs of running a museum over the last decade. Three closely related factors stand out as the key causes of these increases: professionalization of the industry, increasing consumer sophistication, and more ambitious programming.

To be sure, some things simply cost more in 1988 than they did in 1978. The Brooklyn Botanic Garden reports that a five-foot flowering Japanese cherry tree cost \$4.15 a decade ago; the same tree costs \$12.30 today. A six-cubic-foot bale of peat moss back then was \$3; now it's \$6. The cost of maintaining a 45-animal working carousel from the 1920s at the Children's Museum in Indianapolis has risen in 10 years from \$15,000 to \$25,000 annually.

Labor and insurance are the most inflationary components of museums' operating budgets. A "labor-intensive" industry, museums typically spend 60-75 percent of their budgets on labor costs (and employee benefits—which have increased an average 8-10 percent a year in the last five—add about 23 percent to the cost of salaries). Liability insurance for an institution like the Exploratorium in San Francisco has risen from \$9,281 in 1981 (for \$5.5 million in coverage) to \$75,388 in this fiscal year (for \$11 million in coverage). In the case of property insurance, art museums have been particularly hard hit by higher premiums as they've seen the value of their permanent collections increase.

But inflation doesn't tell the whole story. Although it costs more to feed an animal in a zoo today than it did in 1978 (food costs have roughly doubled), the fact is that most zoo animals are eating better now. The Atlanta zoo spends \$1,120 a year to feed one of its gorillas a balanced diet consisting of Purina Monkey Chow, peanuts, apples, oranges, bananas, collard greens, carrots, raisins, and dried cow's milk. The Monkey Chow—a scientifically developed dietary supplement—wasn't available 10 years ago.

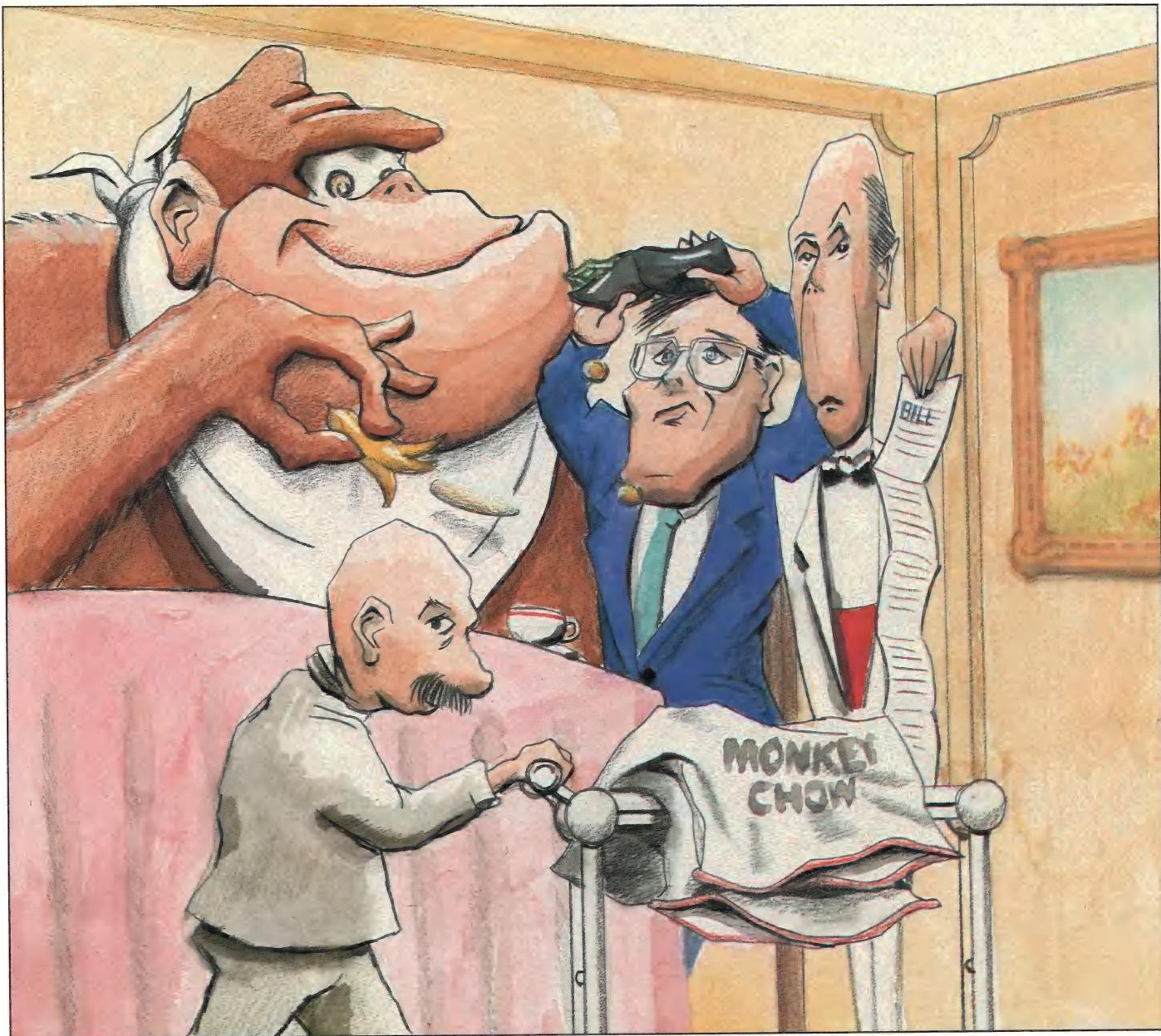
The need for museums to compete with other forms of entertainment for the consumer's time and money has meant a costly emphasis on high technology. The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, the largest of its kind

in the world, recently spent \$100,000 to produce an "interactive" video that enables children to "speak" with children from other countries around the world on seven video monitors in the museum. Ten years ago the museum most likely would have purchased a film on the subject for \$200 and projected it in a mini-theater. Videos, in the words of Bob Jenkins, director of operations and husbandry for the National Aquarium in Baltimore, are "the craze in exhibitory right now." It's an expensive craze. A high-quality 5' x 5' graphic, including color photos, depicting a concept that takes place in the natural world, can be produced for \$3,000-\$5,000. A video in the same space will cost four times as much—about \$12,000-\$20,000.

The consumer's demand for verisimilitude—in zoos and aquariums, for instance—carries a high price tag. "With the advent of the 'cageless zoo,'" says the National Aquarium's Jenkins, "there has been a renaissance in the industry. There's been a shift in emphasis from 'look at that funny fish' to 'look at that neat habitat.' People's standards are higher, and the habitat has to look the way it's supposed to look." Accordingly, when the National Aquarium was building its newly opened Children's Cove, it spent \$500,000 to build a replica of an Atlantic coral reef in its 330,000-gallon tank. Thirteen years ago, a similar, though much smaller (40,000-gallon tank) reef cost around \$12,000. The Children's Cove also boasts hand-sculpted rock work, which took five men four weeks to build and cost \$65,000.

Art and history museums, too, face a heightened demand for sophistication—and the concomitant expense—in the shows they mount. The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) reports that in 1977 a modest photo-panel exhibition like its *Folk Baroque in Mexico* could be rented by a museum for a four- to five-week run for \$225, including 50 copies of the catalogue. Today a similar exhibit could not be rented for under \$3,000. A 1977 SITES exhibition, *The Treasures of Cyprus*, which was shown at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Los Angeles County Museum (and was considered, with

# Monkey Chow

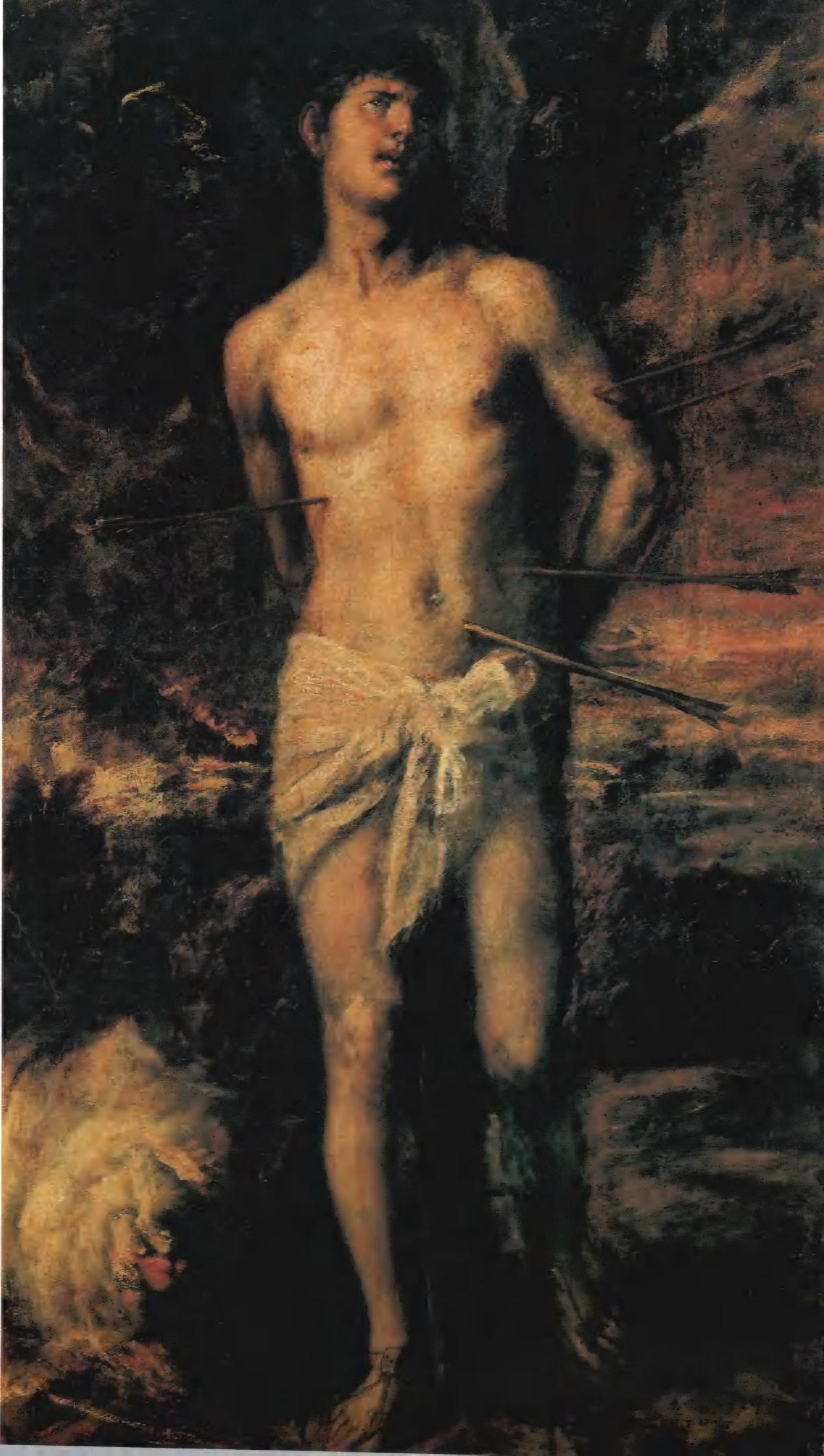


178 objects, to be a medium- to large-sized show), was available for a \$4,500 rental fee. A current show of similar scope, *From Ebla to Damascus: The Art and Architecture of Ancient Syria*, (277 objects), rents for \$58,500. These increases can be partially attributed to more advanced technology (climatized vans, not in use in 1977, have increased transportation costs tenfold) and insurance companies' demands for special packing and couriers for

priceless objects. But most exhibitions are now accompanied by more and better produced scholarly and educational materials, which means increased labor and material costs.

In short, museums are simply doing more—and doing it better—than they used to. As Eileen Rose, acting director of SITES, says, "Museums have entered show business." Such an entry doesn't come cheap. □

The Hermitage Museum in Leningrad sent Titian's *San Sebastian* (ca. 1575-76) to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., to herald the Reagan-Gorbachev summit.



# Soviet-American Cultural Exchanges

*The Russians Are Coming—and the Americans Are Going*

**S**erious artists have been known to believe that only art can save the world. Who knows? With the recent cultural exchange agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union, at the very least art could well stave off Armageddon for a while.

The Cold War between the two countries had thawed enough by the mid-1970s so that works of art were being exchanged between

the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and Russian museums. But then came Afghanistan and the subsequent chill in relations, putting an end to most exchanges until the agreement signed by President Reagan and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev at the Geneva summit in November 1985. In that agreement's Program of Cooperation, plans were laid "for the exchange of art exhibitions of equal quality" between museums of the two

**By Henrietta Wexler**

The National Gallery will send El Greco's *Laocoön* (ca. 1610) to the Hermitage in honor of its 225th anniversary in 1989.



countries.

The summit in Washington, D.C., in December 1987 highlighted the resumption of cultural exchanges. To coincide with the event, the Hermitage in Leningrad sent to Washington's National Gallery of Art Titian's *Saint Sebastian*. In exchange they were promised the National Gallery's *Laocoön* by El Greco,



*Grain Harvest*, by Natalia Goncharova, included in the SITES-organized *Russia, the Land, the People*, which opened in October 1986 in Washington, D.C.

which will be shipped to the Hermitage in time for its 225th anniversary celebration in 1989. Both the Titian and the work by El Greco deal with punishment. The symbolism, if any, in the exchange of these two remarkable portraits of human suffering is left for Soviet and American viewers to ponder.

After the Geneva agreement, the first major art exchange opened at the National Gallery of Art in May 1986. From the Hermitage in Leningrad and the Pushkin in Moscow came 41 impressionist, postimpressionist, and early modern paintings, described by National Gallery director J. Carter Brown as "some of the finest examples of impressionism to early modern painting anywhere."

Another early show that hewed closely to the spirit of exchanging "art exhibitions of equal quality" was the SITES-organized *Russia, the Land, the People: Russian Painting 1850-1910*, which opened in October 1986 at

the Renwick Gallery in Washington and traveled afterwards to Chicago and Cambridge, Massachusetts. In that exchange, the United States sent to the Soviet Union *New Horizons: American Painting 1840-1910*.

The 64 paintings in *New Horizons*, representing the works of 35 American artists, will tour the Soviet Union until May 1988, starting at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow and going on to museums in Leningrad and Minsk. Funding was provided by PepsiCo and the Armand Hammer Foundation.

It is not only the large museums like the Met and the National Gallery that are engaged in these olive-branch exchanges. The Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) received the Hermitage's *Holy Family with Angels* by Rembrandt (1645) in exchange for its *Agony in the Garden* by El Greco. The Brandywine River Museum in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, also participated in the program by sending *An American Vision: Three Generations of Wyeth Art* in exchange for *Three Soviet Artists: Boris Ugarov, Tair Salabov, and Dimitri Bisti*. The three-generation Wyeth show was seen by Soviet audiences in Leningrad and Moscow during the winter of 1986 and the spring of 1987, while the three Soviet artists were shown at Brandywine from February to April 1987.

*Dutch and Flemish Paintings from the Hermitage* will be on view at the Met in New York and at the Art Institute of Chicago during 1988, in New York from March 26 through June 5, and in Chicago from July 9 through September 18. In return, an exhibition of the same number (51) of French impressionist and postimpressionist paintings from the New York and Chicago collections will be sent to the Hermitage. The masterpieces from the Hermitage will include works by Rembrandt, Rubens, van Dyck, Hals, van Ruisdael, and Jordaens. Most of the paintings have not been seen outside the Hermitage since the 18th century, when Catherine the Great amassed her magnificent collection.

Despite the official expiration date of December 1988, plans for more exchanges under the Geneva agreement reach into the 1990s. In 1990, the Soviets will send to the Met in New York and to the Art Institute of Chicago a group of paintings by French masters, from Poussin to Matisse, in exchange for a selection of medieval art.

These are exciting prospects for museum staffers and museum visitors in both countries. With plans for exchanges reaching into the mid-90s, we may have a chance to find out whether art can really save the world—at least in our time. □

# Film and Video Surveyed

By Wendy A. Stein

**A**merican museums have been involved with films since the days of the silent screen; they participated in the "golden age" of television, and have enthusiastically joined the video revolution. A recent survey has measured this interest in cinematic arts.

The Program for Art on Film, a joint venture between the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the J. Paul Getty Trust, last year undertook a comprehensive survey of the production, use, and distribution of film and video in over 500 museums. The response rate was nearly 50 percent to the 63-item questionnaire. According to the survey, 53 percent of art museums regularly or occasionally produce films and videos; 86 percent show film or video in galleries or auditoriums; 46 percent acquire and keep film or video programs; and 40 percent are involved in film and/or video distribution.

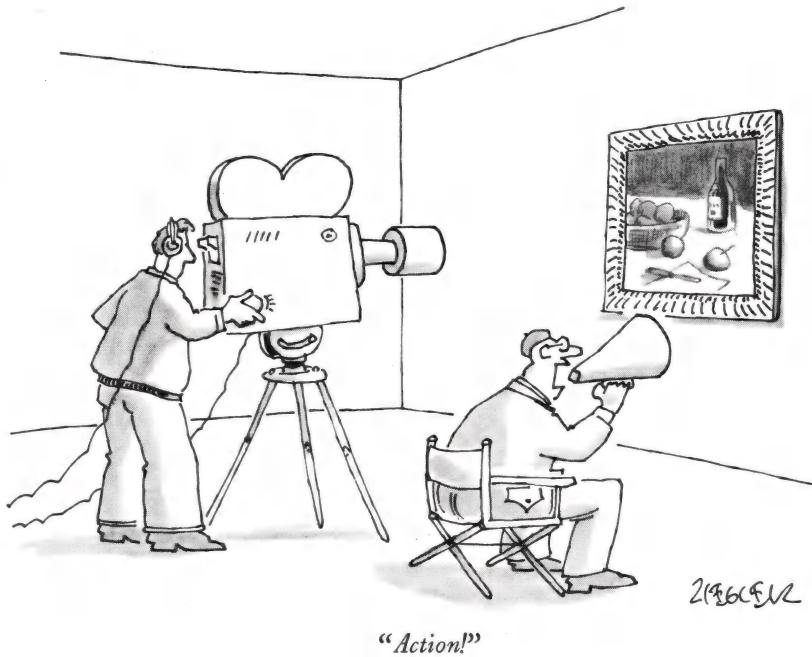
Most museums (53 percent) often make do with lean resources, for many of the producers are relatively small institutions making videos on low budgets. As for exhibition, that such a high number (86 percent) show films indicates the importance of museums as a major cinematic market. The biggest surprise is distribution, where few would imagine that as many as 40 percent of the museums responding could undertake this ancillary activity. Most, however, distribute video, not film, and these are usually produced by the museum.

## Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Richmond, Virginia

The numbers on distribution were impressive: 500 films and 150 videotapes distributed by the museum to a Virginia-wide network of member nonprofit institutions. The catalogue of documentaries on art and related subjects may be the largest offered by any art museum in the country.

The coordinator of tours has initiated an innovative film exhibition program: a film related to a temporary exhibition is shown, followed immediately by a gallery tour that takes interested members of the film audience to the temporary exhibition, and finally to the permanent collections, directly relating the material in the film to the art on the walls and in the gallery rooms.



"Action!"

Drawing by Ziegler  
©1986, The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

## Museum of Modern Art of Latin America

Washington, D.C.

Supported by the Organization of American States, the museum displays the art and culture of Latin America and creates video programs for distribution in North and South America. In 1986 the museum produced a television series in Spanish that was broadcast first in Venezuela, and then in other South American countries. Although excerpts have appeared in the United States, the series awaits its debut on North American television.

## Long Beach Museum of Art

Long Beach, California

This small California museum is unusually active in the field of video art. Its video annex produces 30-50 tapes a year, including three cable television series. Its collection of video art tapes is probably the largest on the West Coast. Since 1974 it has been exhibiting video art on a regular basis.

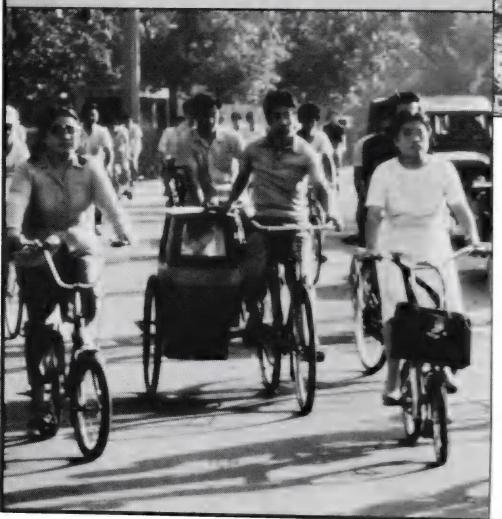
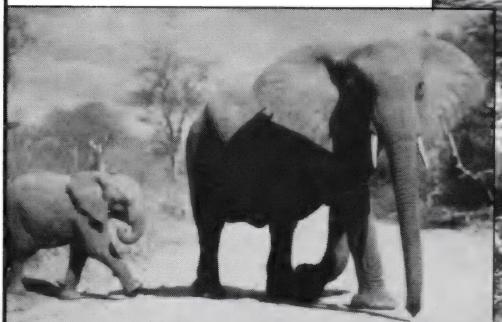
The annex is a complete video production and post-production studio, creating videos both *about* art and artists and *as* art. Its largest project is "Arts Review," a series for Los Angeles-area cable. Its facilities are also open to artists working on commission. □

*The Program for Art on Film seeks articles, bibliographical citations, filmographic information on films about art, and printouts of film holdings of art museums. Contact: Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10021.*

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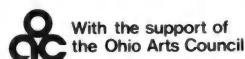
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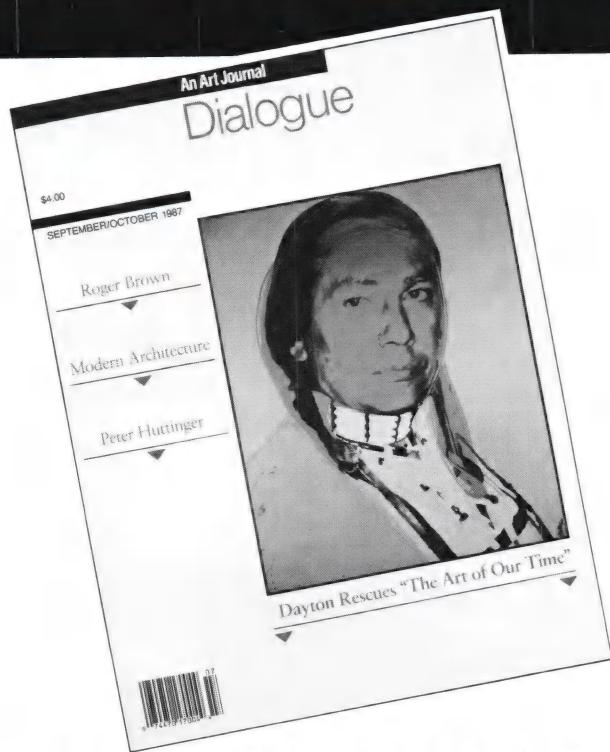
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# Anniversaries Pay Off

## A Chronicle of Successes

By Alvin H. Reiss

**W**hen the Newport Harbor Art Museum officially concludes its 25th-anniversary celebration on June 25 with a "Goodbye 25 Years, Hello Next 25 Years Ball," 18 months will have passed since the anniversary year began with a black tie "Silver Solstice Ball." Between December 1986 and June 1988 this small, lively museum in Newport Beach, California, will have raised

rently celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding not of the museum, but of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. The Wharton Center at Michigan State University recently celebrated the 75th anniversary of the first cultural program presented by the university—a pragmatic move since this performing arts center had celebrated the fifth anniversary of its opening the year before.

Although some museums have limited their anniversary to a single, well promoted funding event, many have spread their celebrations over a year or more and included not only funding projects but special events and major exhibitions. The Metropolitan Museum of Art's centennial was celebrated from September 1969 into the beginning of 1971. Close to 40 percent of the individual and corporate donors had never contributed to the museum before.

One of the most successful anniversaries in recent years—the Museum of Modern Art's 50th in 1979—used promotional underwriting to trigger additional funding. The celebration received an unexpected boost when the Dry Dock Savings Bank took on the anniversary as a major promotional campaign, spending more than \$750,000 in newspaper and broadcast advertising. Highlighting the promotion was a 10-week contest asking newspaper readers to identify works from the museum's permanent collection. Winners, selected from nearly 500,000 entries, were given MOMA memberships and framed prints.

John Limpert Jr., MOMA's former development director and currently vice-president for development and marketing at the New York Botanical Garden, recalls the anniversary's success. "A big factor in winning sponsorship for all six of our major exhibitions during the period was the anniversary. The Dry Dock promotion gave us tremendous visibility and helped us to increase funding on all fronts."

Museums planning anniversary celebrations should remember that the techniques are the same for small and large institutions. There must be a range of funding events and exhibitions, directed to a range of audiences, so that interest will be sustained. □



Newport Harbor Art Museum's 25th anniversary "Silver Solstice" gala.

more than \$500,000 from five separate anniversary events and \$500,000 in additional anniversary donations, attracted national attention, and launched an ambitious drive for a new \$50-million facility.

These results, while impressive, are hardly unique. In recent years museums have discovered that anniversaries are potent occasions that provide both a rationale for celebrating their achievements and vast opportunities for tapping new sources of support.

Museums also have exercised great flexibility in determining what is to be celebrated. New York City's Guggenheim Museum, for example, is cur-

Outside events may trigger an anniversary. The Florida State Museum's upcoming blockbuster exhibition, *First Encounters*, commemorates the 500th anniversary of Columbus' expedition to the New World and includes a sponsorship package that will enable the exhibition to tour 12 major locations throughout the country.

Whatever the anniversary, museums have been quick to seize the opportunities one presents. New York City's Queens Museum used its recent 15th-birthday gala as a drawing card for new members, offering free admission to those who joined the museum at the \$50-and-above level.

# The People Appeal: A Case Study

By Ann T. Olbrich

**A**nniversaries are for celebrating, and museums that make these celebrations happen are finding them both exhilarating and exhausting—but worth the effort. Perhaps no other event can create so much recognition and goodwill. Anniversaries are landmarks; they make a public statement about the museum's achievements. As public events, they can involve more people than the museum has ever attracted, to share what the museum has meant to them and their community—or to learn what it can mean.

Recently the Bruce Museum, a small multidisciplinary museum in Greenwich, Connecticut, celebrated its 75th anniversary with 75 days of special events and activities honoring the museum and the diversity of its heritage. They were planned and managed by ad hoc committees that oversaw each project or event. Some of the committee members had previously been active at the museum; some had not. New volunteers joined in the planning at the personal request of museum staff and regular volunteers. Additional people heard about the anniversary through publicity efforts, especially an article about the museum that appeared in the volunteer column of the local newspaper. In every case, the involvement of new people added richness to celebration ideas and a wealth of new resources.

The focal point of the celebration was an exhibition called *Treasures of the Bruce Museum*, which reviewed the museum's colorful history and displayed objects from all its collections. Volunteers with expertise in the arts and sciences reviewed the museum's collections to assist in selecting the "treasures." They also researched objects and prepared catalogue and checklist materials. Another volunteer wrote the museum's history.

Enlisting the help of volunteers at

the planning stage is only the beginning of the ways in which a museum anniversary can involve people. Even more important is designing events that will draw a wide variety of participants. The day after the preview gala, for example, the museum invited members, friends, and the general public to a vintage 1918 birthday party. Another aspect of the Bruce's anniversary served to draw people in.

television. The cooperation of the press can be enlisted at a press luncheon or conference and through the distribution of a press kit. A slide show presented in the local library or in the schools can expand awareness of the anniversary to special segments of the population. Once the celebration is under way, photographing events serves not only to document but to publicize them.



Dressed to party: vintage theme to honor the Bruce Museum's 75th anniversary.

The Smithsonian National Associates Lecture and Seminar Program sponsored five days of lectures on topics ranging from American art and the crafts movement to photography, nature, and gardening.

The success of these events depends, of course, on "getting the word out." Effective publicity begins with expanding normal communications channels and developing targeted, special-interest publicity and mailings. Dates, times, and locations of events should be publicized through all available resources, including mailing lists, community calendars, and local papers, radio, and

For celebrations are people. As the spirit catches on, participation snowballs. Enthusiasm builds, and with it can come surprises. Of special significance for the museum was the commission of an anniversary gift—a 36-foot totem pole carved by a native Tsimshian artist.

From start to finish, behind the scenes and up front, people make a celebration happen. Anniversaries give people a reason to celebrate, and, planned with people in mind, they can be occasions that bond, move, and motivate an entire community. And that, in itself, is something special to celebrate! □

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# Christian Saint and Pharaonic God

By Donald Garfield

## Baroque Masterpiece Makes Baltimore Its New Home

According to Robert P. Bergman, director of the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, "Guido Reni's *Penitent Magdalen*, which is in miraculously pristine condition, may be the single most important Old Master painting purchased by the Walters since its establishment in 1931." The purchase demonstrates the museum's ability to acquire major works in an era of stratospheric prices and corporate competition in the auction room. The Walters succeeded in purchasing the work thanks to the W. Alton Jones Foundation Acquisition Fund.

When baroque painting fell out of favor at the turn of the century, Guido lost his status as "divine"—equal to the Renaissance trinity of Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Raphael.

Painted in 1630, the *Penitent Magdalen* (right) depicts the former prostitute, saved by Christ, turning upward in a heaven-directed gaze, while a mass of hair and drapery swirls around her. She is not the emaciated Magdalen of the early Renaissance, skin and bones after 30 years as a hermit, but a sensuous beauty, in keeping with 17th-century religiosity.

Guido Reni's *Magdalen*, now housed in the Walters' 1974 addition, awaits the completion this May of the 1904 Gallery (see page 16).

## Brooklyn's Bridge to Ancient Egypt

A limestone male head (far right), four inches high, has been added to the Brooklyn Museum's premier collection of Egyptian antiquities. Its open-eyed expression, full cheeks, and sharp incision of the stone are the tell-tale signs of a date during Egypt's Middle Kingdom.

The striated wig (Egyptians sensibly shaved their heads and wore wicker



wigs) surrounds an engaging face. A plaited beard (also artificial) raises the likelihood that the figure is divine, not human. If so, the piece may once have served as a stopper for a cultic vessel. The work was purchased with funds provided by Christos G. Bastis and the Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund.

The Brooklyn Museum, before it purchases an object like this limestone Egyptian head, investigates its past history to ensure that the acquisition did not leave its home illegally or under suspicious circumstances. □



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Pittsburgh is a kaleidoscope of changing images, constantly transforming its outward face where it seeks to preserve the roots that are its ethnic and industrial heritage. It's not surprising that Rand McNally has named Pittsburgh America's most liveable city. With its abundant natural, cultural, industrial and human resources, Pittsburgh has become known as America's Renaissance City.

Plan now to join over 3,000 museum professionals in the immortal city of Pittsburgh, June 3-7, 1988. The 83rd AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS Annual Meeting will feature program sessions for directors, registrars, curators, designers, educators, conservators, public relations officers and volunteers. The David L. Lawrence Convention Center will be the site where ideas will be shared at seminars, AAM grant counseling and job placement takes place and suppliers are displayed in the exhibit hall. The new Vista International Hotel will be the headquarters hotel for accommodations and the Pittsburgh museum community will be the hosts for an array of evening activities.

We invite you to take part in this opportunity for renewal at the 83rd Annual Meeting. If you are interested in the issues facing museums today and the future, return this coupon to receive further information on the 83rd annual meeting of the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS.

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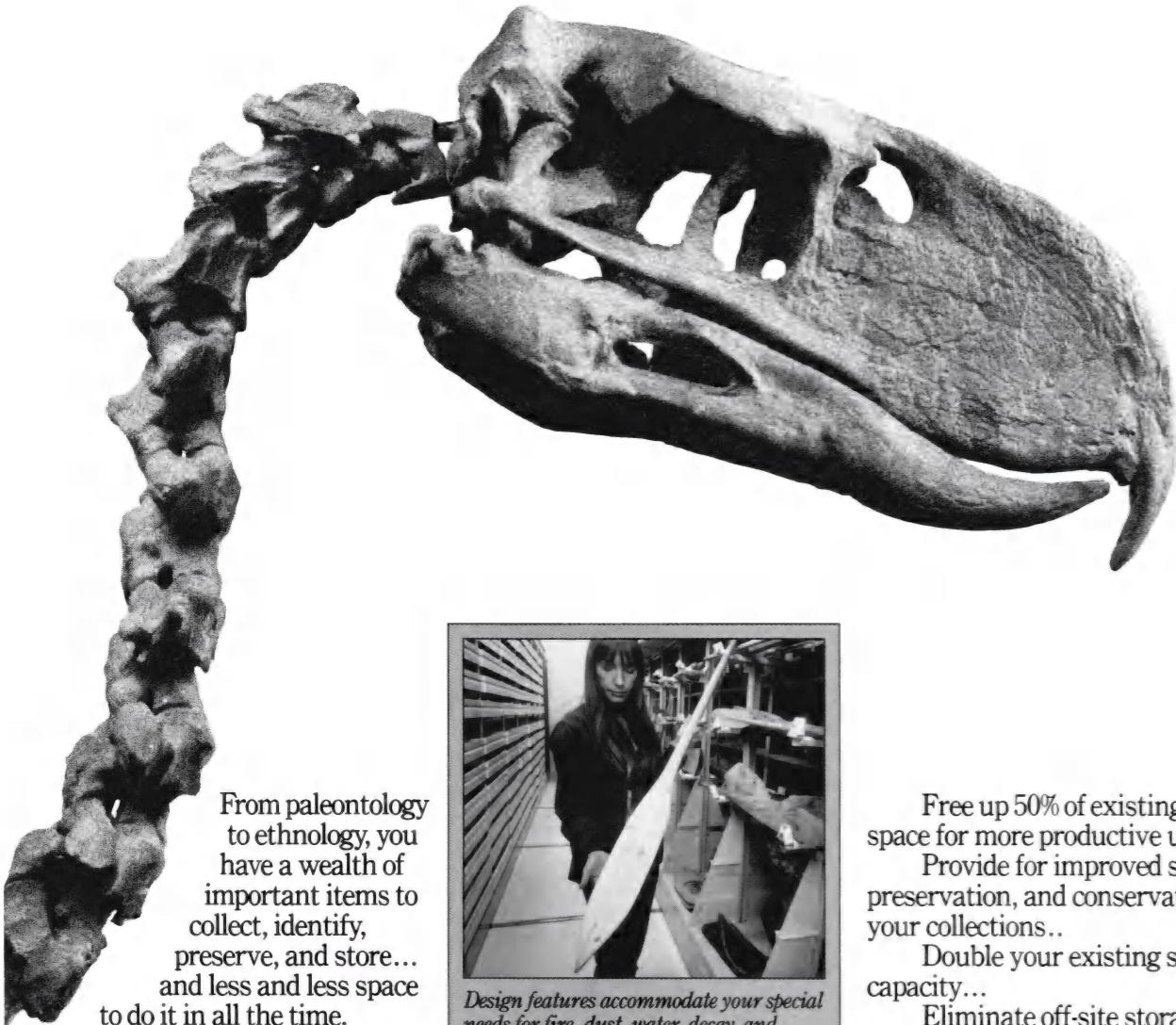
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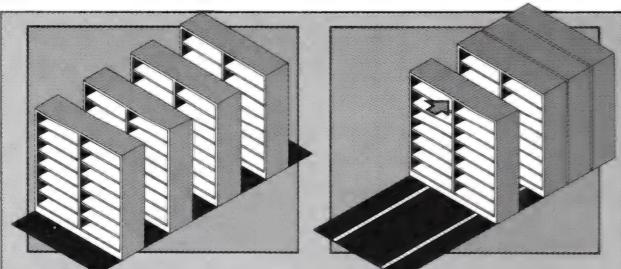
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# Exhibition Openings

## Highlights and Reviews

By Henrietta Wexler

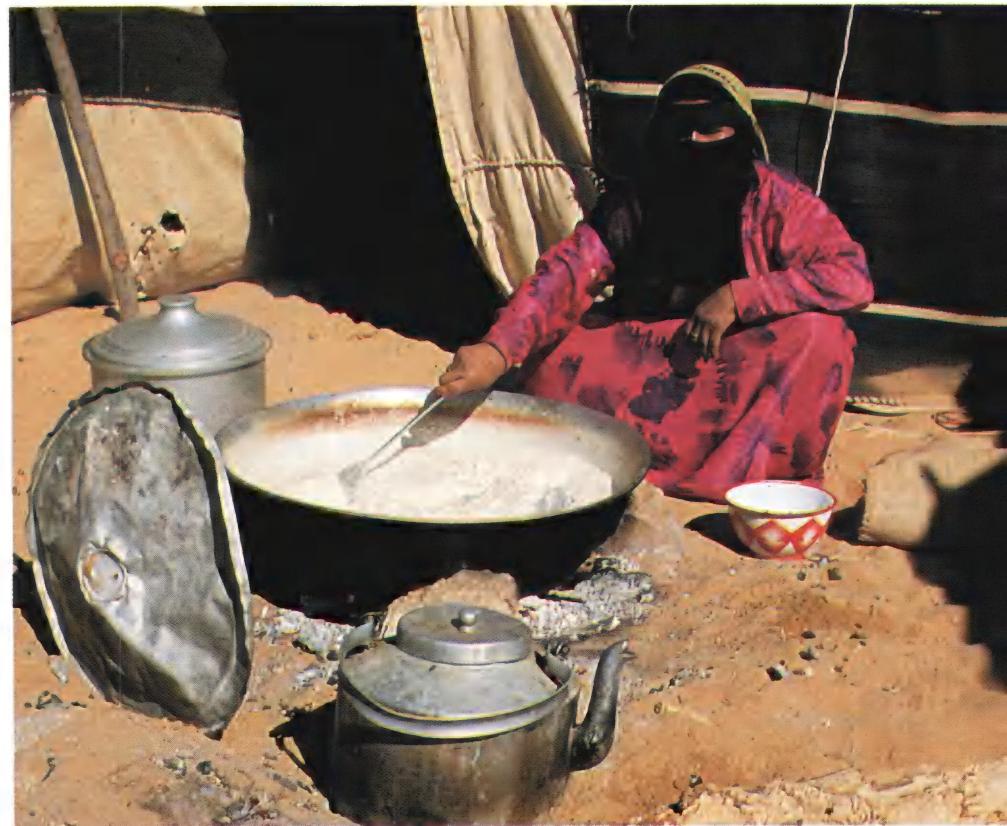
### Palms and Pomegranates: Traditional Dress of Saudi Arabia

Westerners have only recently discovered wearable art; Saudi Arabians have been clothing themselves in their art for millennia.

*Palms and Pomegranates* displays this art in some 30 Saudi traditional clothing ensembles for women and men, as well as the late King Faisal's vast Koran manuscript collection, and examples of metalwork, glass, pottery, and textiles created by Arab artisans through the centuries. Beginning at Harvard's Semitic Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1987, the exhibition will tour four other cities in the United States and conclude in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1989.

Both palms and pomegranates are among the traditional embroidery motifs sewn into the *thawb*, the basic full-length garment still worn by both sexes. Pomegranates because the Koran says that this luscious fruit will be among the delicacies found in heaven; palms, prominent in Saudi culture, appear above crossed swords in the national Saudi Arabian seal.

Most of the ensembles displayed are from the collection of the wife of the Saudi ambassador to the United States, Princess Haifa bint Faisal, daughter of the late King Faisal. The garments are not only dazzling in their range of color and design, but so practical they may well give Westerners something to think about for next year's fashions. Men's and women's garments are basically similar, with regional variations due to climate and tribal distinctions. Bedouins traditionally sit cross-legged or reclining on carpets and bolsters, so that loose and unrevealing clothing has been essential. Every item of traditional apparel was designed for protection against the relentless desert sun and the frigid desert nights. Headcloths were drawn



Bedouin woman wearing *thawb* prepares porridge.

about the face to guard against blowing sand, and to shade eyes from glare. Sheer, cool, indoor garments are covered by black outer cloaks for outdoor practicality and modesty. Married women wore blue; single ones proclaimed their availability in the color orange. And the garments are full enough to be worn by women throughout pregnancy.

The geometric shapes and flowing curvilinear designs of arabesques are sewn into the garments. These arabesques, also taking the shapes of flowers, plants, and trees, reflect the Islamic precept against representation of the human form.

Jewelry from Bedouin tribes was a portable store of wealth and negotiable assets. Silver jewelry presented to a woman at her wedding became her

personal wealth, but this dowry was not hidden away in caves or in safe-deposit boxes. The jewels were proudly displayed on a cushion tied round the bride's neck.

This exhibition will help preserve priceless examples of the craft of Arabian costume, which is at risk of disappearing as Saudi Arabia continues to Westernize its way of life.

*Palms and Pomegranates* will be at the Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, June 1-July 31; at the Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, August 16-October 2; at the San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio, Texas, November 3-January 1, 1989; and finally at the Jacksonville Museum of Arts and Sciences, Jacksonville, Florida, January 26, 1989-March 26, 1989.

### Anselm Kiefer Retrospective

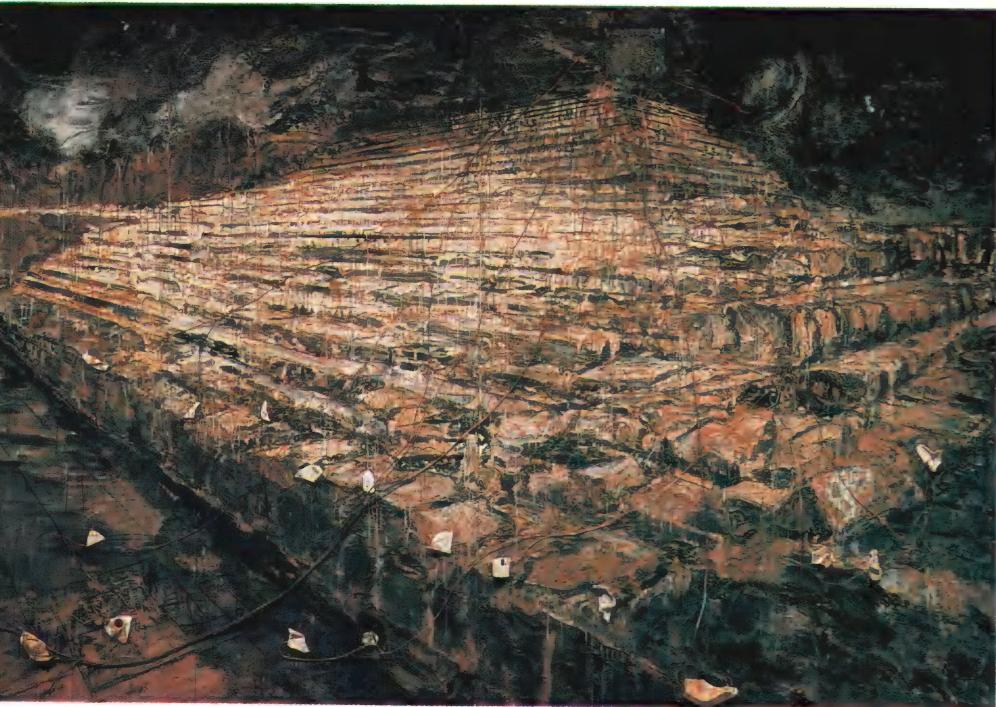
Anselm Kiefer could well be a supernova about to burst on the American art scene after being celebrated in Europe for almost 20 years. The first American retrospective of the 42-year-old German artist has been organized by the Art Institute of Chicago and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and sponsored by Ford Motor Company and the Lannan Foundation.

Turning to art after abandoning the study of law in 1966, Kiefer visited the monastery at La Tourette built by Le Corbusier to learn how spiritual ideas could be made concrete. For several weeks he lived in a cell and immersed himself in the Dominicans' daily rituals. The influence of that experience can be seen in the works in this exhibition.

Curator Mark Rosenthal of the Phil-



Anselm Kiefer's *Resurrexit* (top), 1973, and *Osiris and Isis* (bottom), 1985-87, two of the artist's compelling visions.



adelphia Museum of Art, in his introduction to the catalogue, has called Kiefer's work "epic elegies to the human condition." But the approximately 70 works in the exhibition can also be viewed on less exalted terms, intermingling as they do abstract and representational art. Rosenthal also says that Kiefer's view of experience is that there are no truths, only interpretations. Viewers are thus chal-

lenged to interpret as they will, basing their views on their own backgrounds and experiences. The works are deceptively accessible, and Kiefer's titles are only clues to what he may have hoped to convey. An apparently representational scene, on closer inspection, becomes more abstract, an abstract one more representational.

A perceptive viewer might guess that the artist must be German. He seems haunted by a past he can neither forget nor make peace with. His thematic repertory includes German romantic poetry, Wagnerian opera, Jewish mysticism, Nazi war planes, the Old and New Testaments, Norse mythology, and alchemy. He uses not only all of Western "civilization" as his sources, but his alchemy succeeds in using all the world's materials—gold, steel, molten lead, acid, wood, stone, ferns, flowers, and straw—to make tangible his compelling visions.

In *Nuremberg* (1982) the snow and ice on a plowed field is laced with golden strands of straw, while in the sky the German words for "Festival Field, Nuremberg" locate the field where 15th-century German Meistersingers competed. *Germany's Spiritual Heroes* (1973), a cavernous wooden structure lit by torches on the walls, mesmerizes a viewer into trying to understand all that Kiefer has put into it. In *Shulamite* (1983) an underground stone structure is taken from a prewar Nazi monument to German soldiers; the arches are black with smoke. The longer you look at these paintings, the more you recognize Kiefer's preoccupation with victors and vanquished, with rot and renewal. These images turn into long-lasting afterimages.

For the exhibition catalogue, Kiefer created an original book of 17 full-bleed double-page photographic images entitled *The Passage Through the Red Sea*.

Following its opening at the Art Institute of Chicago and its presentation in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (March 6-May 1), the exhibition will travel to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, June 14-September 11; and to the Museum of Modern Art, New York, October 17-January 3, 1989). □

## The Human Figure in Early Greek Art

In its earliest phases Greek art's rendering of the human form was hardly different from that of other ancient cultures, including the Egyptian culture. Over a period of four centuries, Greek artists evolved formulas that culminated in the classical style of the second half of the fifth century B.C. This exhibition of objects from Greek museums, many seen for the first time outside the country, traces the development from the virtual stick figures of the geometric style to the more human look of the early classical period.

Jan 31-Jun 12, 1988:  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington, DC

Jul 16-Oct 12, 1988:  
Nelson-Atkins Museum of  
Art, Kansas City, MO

Nov 13-Jan 15, 1989:  
Los Angeles County  
Museum of Art, CA

Feb 18-May 7, 1989:  
Art Institute of Chicago, IL

Jun 7-Sept 3, 1989:  
Museum of Fine Arts,  
Boston, MA



## Degas

The first major retrospective in 50 years of the work of Edgar Degas (1834-1917) includes paintings, pastels, drawings, monotypes, prints, photographs, and sculpture. *Degas* will be the first international exhibition in the National Gallery of Canada.

Feb 9-May 16, 1988:  
Grand Palais, Paris

Jun 16-Aug 28, 1988:  
National Gallery of  
Canada, Ottawa, Ontario

Sept 27-Jan 8, 1989:  
Metropolitan Museum of  
Art, New York, NY

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Feb-Apr 1988:  
Science Museum of  
Minnesota, St. Paul, MN

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Industry, Chicago, IL

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Industry, Columbus, OH

Feb-Apr 1989:  
Museum of Science,  
Boston, MA

Jun-Aug 1989:  
Franklin Institute of  
Science, Philadelphia, PA

## A Graphic Muse Prints by Contemporary American Women

Organized by Mount Holyoke College Art Museum to honor the 150th anniversary of the college's founding, the exhibition of 24 artists active today reveals a broad range of styles, from realism to abstraction and expressionism. Printmaking is a major medium for some of the artists, while for others it is an adjunct to painting or sculpture.

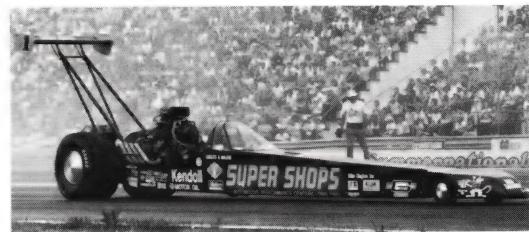
Feb 13-Apr 3, 1988:  
Santa Barbara Museum of  
Art, CA

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Arts, Richmond, VA

Jun 30-Aug 7, 1988:  
Nelson-Atkins Museum of  
Art, Kansas City, MO

Sept 18-Nov 6, 1988:  
Tampa Museum of Art, FL

Left: Marble statue of a kore (maiden) of the fifth century, B.C.



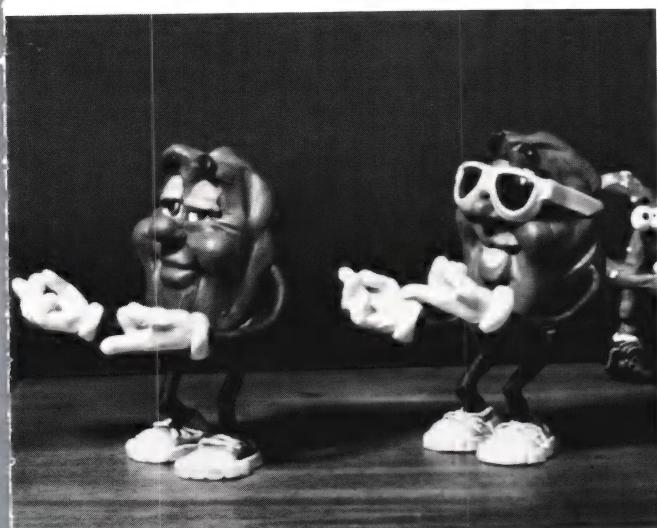
## A Material World

Artifacts have changed composition over the course of American history from natural to manufactured materials, then to the synthetics that dominate the late 20th century. This exhibition shows how these changes are related to shifting American cultural values.

Permanent installation opening Apr 7, 1988:  
National Museum of  
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Above: The "Swamp Rat XXX," featured in the *Material World* exhibition.

Bottom left: Claymation's California Raisins.



### The Eloquent Object

Surveying 40 years of American art in craft media, the exhibition features materials ranging from fiber to metal, showcasing the imaginative and innovative uses of materials that have characterized the Studio Craft Movement since World War II.

Right: From Field to Factory, a photo of the journey north.

Below: Richard Shaw's earthenware Couch.

Feb 20-May 15, 1988:  
Oakland Museum, CA



Above: *Apparition Canyon*, 1982, earthenware bowl by Wayne Higby.

Jul 6-Aug 28, 1988:  
Museum of Fine Arts,  
Boston, MA

Oct 1-Dec 30, 1988:  
Chicago Public Library  
Cultural Center, IL

Mar 19-May 14, 1989:  
Orlando Museum of Art,  
FL

Right: *The Return from the Wild Boar Hunt* (detail), fragment of a fourth century A.D., hunting mosaic.



### Field to Factory

Afro-American Migration,  
1915-1940

Focuses on a critical period in America's social and demographic history from an Afro-American perspective, through oral histories and personal artifacts that document the migration of southern rural blacks to the cities of the North. The exhibition has three parts: life in the South; the journey north; and the new northern world. A Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) offering.

Feb 27-Mar 27, 1988:  
Jacksonville Museum of  
Arts and Sciences, FL

Apr 16-May 15, 1988:  
Long Island University,  
Brooklyn, NY

Jun 4-Jul 3, 1988:  
Baltimore Museum of  
Industry, MD

Sept 10-Oct 9, 1988:  
Sloss Furnaces National  
Historic Landmark,  
Birmingham, AL

### Hidden Life

An Exotic Rain Forest in  
Baltimore's National  
Aquarium

Seven naturalistic displays augment the aquarium's South American rain forest exhibit by providing visitors with unique glimpses of more than 60 multicolored and unusual animals, ranging from amphibians to reptiles. The settings carefully mirror the animals' Central and South American habitats.

Permanent installation  
recently opened.  
National Aquarium,  
Baltimore, MD

### Carthage

A Mosaic of Ancient  
Tunisia

Once Rome's staunchest foe, this North African city later became a Roman satellite, part of the Mediterranean *pax Romana*. Among the many artifacts documenting the Carthaginian culture, 17 pictorial mosaics vividly evoke life in the region during the first four centuries A.D.

Through May 1, 1988:  
American Museum of  
Natural History, New York,  
NY

Jun 15-Sept 15, 1988:  
Houston Museum of  
Natural Science, TX

Nov 15-Feb 15, 1989:  
New Orleans Museum of  
Art, LA

Apr 15-Jul 15, 1989:  
Albuquerque Museum,  
NM

Sept 15-Dec 30, 1989:  
Natural History Museum  
of Los Angeles County, CA



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- specialized lightweight tour equipment
- superior profits from tour sales at your exhibitions

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- tours in the PBS/BBC documentary style
- stereo tours with music

The writers and producers of Soundalive tours are many of the same people who prepared the recorded tours for major museums in the United States over the last decade, as well as drama, news, and documentary specialists from National Public Radio and the BBC.

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Sir Roy Strong  
President

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Sr. Vice President

## Soundalive Ltd.

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Outside of North America please contact:  
Soundalive Tours Ltd., 30 Grove End Rd., St. Johns Wood,  
London, UK 01-289-6081.

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# A Design Classic Returns

**Help for the Small Museum:  
Handbook of Exhibit Ideas and Methods**  
Arminta Neal, 2nd ed., Boulder, Colo.: Pruett Publishing Co., 1969, 1987. 176 pp., hardbound.

Reviewed by Alice Hemenway

Over the past 20 years, Arminta Neal has written and lectured on exhibit technique for museums on low budgets and without highly skilled designers or artisans. Initially, she was a voice crying in the wilderness. When I began working with small museums 14 years ago, I could walk into the lobby of a museum anywhere in the country and tell immediately if its staff had read and adopted her advice. Now she has revised and updated her 1969 *Help for the Small Museum*.

Every museum could use a little help with its design. A good example of bad design.

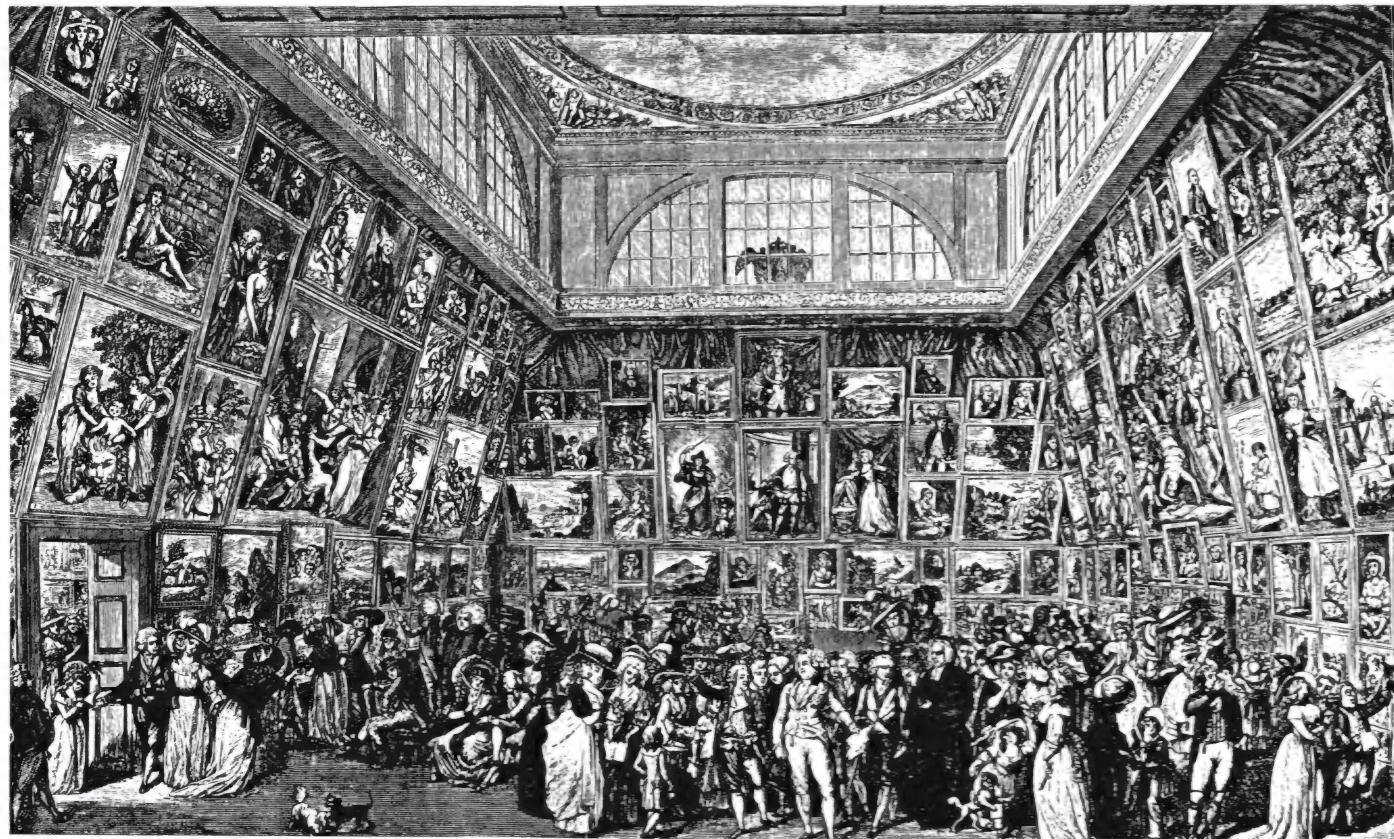
While the intervening years have seen the proliferation of seminars, workshops, books, technical leaflets, and even university courses on collection care and exhibition for the small museum, they have also seen a remarkable growth of local and regional museums, especially historical societies and science centers. Neal's books are still valuable guides to these museums—and to larger institutions that aspire to simple, clutter-free design. Her greatest strengths are in her discussions of audience (traffic flow, physical comfort while visiting an exhibit, the particulars of handicapped access), her designs for new or remodeled exhibit cases, and her advice on using the available space effectively.

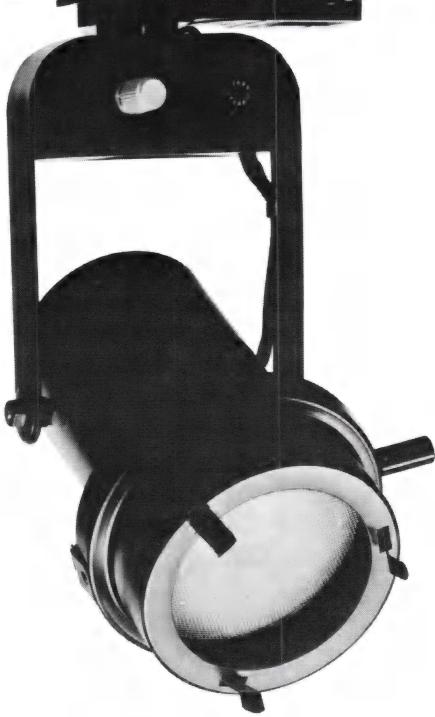
The quality of her line drawings is

superb: they are extremely easy to follow and use as the basis for one's own work. The photographs, while well selected, are badly reproduced and therefore not very effective. This strange lapse in a book on exhibits is a shame, as much of her message is conveyed through the photos.

Unfortunately, she skimps on several important—and difficult—topics: conservation of objects on exhibit, research, and development of a coherent, interpretive story line. These have become much more important to the museum community over the past decades and are crucial to effective educational exhibits.

Any small museum that does not own the first edition would be well advised to buy the second one. □





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*Museum News: March/April 1988*



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Museum News: March/April 1988



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MN 2/88

# Marketplace

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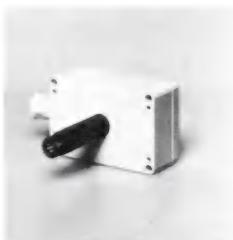
100-\$45/each; 250-\$35/each. Contact Paula Sinclair, DRT Corporation, 690 Mendelsohn Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55427, (800)345-4118. (#33)

**Donna Lawrence Productions** specializes in 360-degree audiovisual presentations in museums. This unusual and dramatic media format has had great success at the Kentucky Derby Museum and the National Museum of the Boy Scouts of

America. With multiple screens and projectors, the installation can help set a tone for an exhibit. Donna Lawrence Productions, P.O. Box 4608, Louisville, KY 40204; (502)589-9617. (#34)

## Climate Control

**Science Associates Inc.** offers six instruments to protect against damages due to temperature, humidity, and light: a hygrothermograph to chart ranges in heat and moisture; a humidity/temperature indicator for instant measurement; an illumination level meter; an ultraviolet light monitor; a battery-operated psychrometer; and a temperature/humidity dial. Science Associates Inc., P.O. Box 230, Princeton, NJ 08542; (800)247-7234. (#35)



**General Eastern Instruments** has introduced a relative humidity and temperature transmitter—Model 814—for continuous monitoring. It can drive recording, controlling, display, or computing devices and is ideal for environmental control. It is compact and comes in wall or duct-mount configurations. Contact Clifford W. Lewis,



General Eastern Instruments, 50 Hunt St., Watertown, MA 02172; (800)225-3205. (#36)

## Cargocaire Engineering Corporation

**Cargocaire Engineering Corporation** offers Moisture Control Services to help solve long- and short-term moisture control, drying, or dehumidification problems, whether it is waterlogged books or a mildew-afflicted facility. It has a 7-days-a-week and 24-hours-a-day emergency service.

Moisture Control Services, 79 Monroe St., Amesbury, MA 01913; (617)388-0600. (#37)

## Displays

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## *Transport*

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Corporation offers efficient, safe, quick, and economical services. Horn Corporation, 44 Dunham Rd., Billerica, MA 01821; (617)667-8797. (#39)



## *Hands-On*

The **Pittsburgh Children's Museum** has begun marketing STUFFEE, its seven-foot soft-sculpture mascot. STUFFEE unzips to reveal the soft-sculpture organs inside. Museum staff can explain human anatomy and pass around organs for "hands-on" examination. Durable and guaranteed for five years. Contact Lora Lee Walker, PCM, One Landmark Sq., Allegheny Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15212; (412)322-5058. (#41)



Ozclip is a multipurpose fitting, which attaches to framed artworks to provide a secure way of either hanging or transporting the object. Designed for lifetime use, the clips eliminate the need for labor-intensive fittings each time a painting is moved. Contact **Moving Art**, Box 11034, Alexandria, VA 22312; (703)941-8206. (#40)

## *Conservation*

**Gold Leaf Conservation Studios** is dedicated to preserving gilded objects, whether it is a piece of furniture, a picture frame, or the background of a

medieval icon. Its staff has worked at the White House, Dumbarton Oaks, and the Smithsonian Institution. Gold Leaf Conservation Studios, 715 G St. NW, Washington, DC 20001; (202)638-4660. (#42)

*To include your product or company in future issues of Museum News, send information to Carlotta M. Eike, Museum News, 1225 Eye St., NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005.*



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N E W F R O M A A S L H



# THE CARE OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS

BY MARGARET HOLBEN ELLIS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
FOR STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY  
172 Second Avenue North  
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(615) 255-2971



All too frequently prints and drawings in both personal and museum collections deteriorate due to an unsafe environment and lack of proper care.

Margaret Holben Ellis, Chair of the Conservation Center at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts and Consulting Conservator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, knows first hand the myriad problems involved in the conservation of prints and drawings. The detailed knowledge acquired during her years of specialized experience is cogently compressed into this illustrated manual, and fills a critical need for practical and straightforward guidance for preventing irretrievable losses.

Addressed to the lay person as well as the museum professional, major topics in her step-by-step instructions include:

- Parchment and Paper: Supports for Prints and Drawings
- The Media of Prints and Drawings
- Matting, Hinging, and Framing
- Storage and Environment
- Basic Conservation Procedures

Appendices on sources of supplies, how to make a paste, and using a thymol cabinet provide further valuable direction. And the text throughout is illustrated with appropriate black-and-white photographs and diagrams.

*The Care of Prints and Drawings* was supported with funds from the J. Paul Getty Trust.

Paperbound. 253 Pages. Index.  
ISBN 0-910050-79-1. Item #682.  
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CA, Riverside, March AFB Mus.  
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CT, Storrs, Nat. Hist. (2 Wells)  
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IA, Cedar Falls, University Mus.  
IL, Rockford, Discovery Center  
IN, Evansville Museum of Arts  
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Coins are dropped into the ramps and circle the vortex making approximately 40 revolutions, each one spiraling closer to the center and attaining eye-blurring speeds before they finally fling through the center hole into the locked receptacle 20 to 30 seconds later.

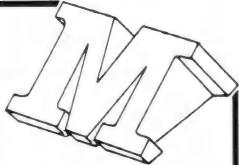
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NY,	Buffalo, Natural Science	VA, Charlottesville, VA Disc. Ctr.
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NY,	Institute of Arts & Sciences	WA, Cheney, Eastern WA Univ.
NC,	Utica, The Children's Museum	WA, Seattle, Pacific Sc. Center (2)
NC,	Durham, Museum of Life and Science	WI, Appleton, Outagamie Museum
NC,	Gastonia, Schiele Natural History (2 Wells)	WI, Madison, Children's Museum
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NC,	Hickory, Catawba Sc. Center	
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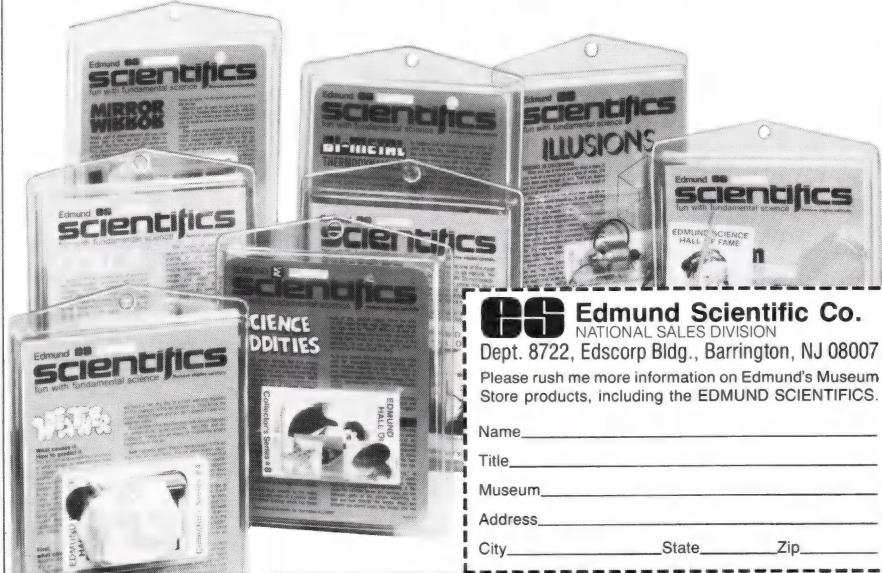
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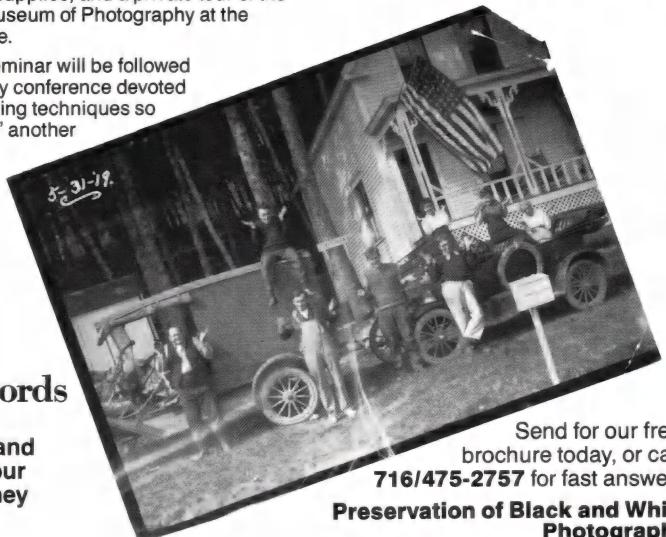
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# Deaccessioning

## The Importance of Procedure

By Marie C. Malaro

**D**eaccessioning (the permanent removal of an object from a museum collection) can be compared to a bowl of marshmallow. It looks benign until you dig in, then it can become messy. Even when thoughtfully approached, deaccessioning can provoke controversy. Emotions may run high, issues tend to blur or, at the very least, create spirited public debate. With every deaccession there is a substantial element of risk, and it is little wonder that most museums prefer to avoid the whole matter. But the enlightened museum must take collection management seriously and in periodic reviews of collection status compelling reasons do arise for consideration of object removal. Perhaps some objects are no longer relevant to the museum's collecting goals or the objects may now be excess to the museum's needs. With maintenance and storage costs steadily increasing, retention of unneeded material becomes more difficult to justify. Often the museum has no means to improve its collection except through exchange, or it may be rich in objects but without the financial resources to provide reasonable care and utilization. It is in accord with legal responsibilities placed on those who manage museums to face the issue of deaccessioning and to provide clear guidance to staff.

This discussion will not elaborate on the many arguments for or against deaccessioning; rather, it will focus on procedures—the steps that should be followed to assure that decisions concerning object removal are made in full compliance with the museum's legal obligations. Procedure can bring a measure of confidence to the deaccession process. If a museum has good procedures, faithfully followed, the right people will be provided with the right kind of information, and reasonable decisions will be made.

It is wise to promulgate standard internal procedures for considering deaccession proposals before a case arises. The goal should be to set in place steps that encourage objective and thorough consideration, and this is easier to accomplish with no particular set of circumstances in mind.

The museum should first clarify its general authority to dispose of objects. This invariably involves a review of the legal documents establishing the museum. (Museums associated with governmental units frequently find their authority to remove objects is uncertain and clarification is advisable.) With general authority confirmed, there should then be clear statements designating the party responsible for making final decisions concerning deaccessions and describing procedures for bringing such matters to the attention of that individual. The level of decision authority may vary depending on the value/significance of the objects in question. Common sense is a realistic guide in determining the appropriate level of final review.

Procedures should encourage *informed* decisions. The deciding party should have facts and figures, and instructions should be given regarding when outside opinions, in addition to staff recommendations, are to be sought. Conscientious fact-finding is most important and without it the deciding party is vulnerable. If a deaccession decision were to be challenged in court, it is not the role of the court to second guess the deciding party but to determine if that party exceeded the bounds of discretion—that is, when a decision is made without benefit of facts or when no reasonable person could reach that decision based on the available facts.

The public is the beneficiary of a museum's work and decisions concerning deaccessioning are to be

made in light of what is perceived to be the best interests of the public. When one acts for a beneficiary (i.e., acts in a trust capacity) one is legally accountable. Being legally accountable means being prepared to prove faithful performance of duties and this, in turn, underscores the importance of complete written records. The museum's deaccessioning procedures should require complete documentation of all relevant matters, and its indefinite retention.

Only objects owned by the museum should be considered for deaccessioning (unless, of course, the purpose of the removal is to return the object to its legitimate owner). The title of all objects under consideration should be checked. Determine if there are any restrictions that may inhibit clear transfer of title.

Compile criteria for justifying the removal of collection objects. Of necessity these criteria are general statements with the burden on the decision-makers to sift and weigh the facts, and find accordingly. This process becomes much more manageable when the decision-makers understand the scope of their authority and the requirement that their decisions reasonably reflect conscientiously gathered facts and opinions.

Once a decision is made to remove an object from a collection a second and equally important decision remains: the appropriate method of disposal. The deaccession procedures require separate consideration of this matter. Preferred methods of disposal as well as cautions about disposals to trustees, staff, or other interested parties may be listed. Again, the decision regarding method of disposal should show a sifting and weighing of the facts and opinions presented.

Procedures for disposal should take into consideration the matter of notice to donors. As a general rule a do-

nor has no legal standing in a deaccessioning determination (a gift having been made for the benefit of the public, it is the public's interest that is at issue) but under certain circumstances it is courteous to notify the donor of the planned transfer. There should also be a reminder about possible Internal Revenue Service requirements concerning notice. Under existing Internal Revenue Service rules (Form 8282) there must be notice to the I.R.S. and the donor if there is a deaccession of an object within two years of donation and if the museum is on notice that the donor obtained a "qualified appraisal" with regard to that donation.

It is sensible to require that there be a determination in advance regarding use of any proceeds from a deaccession. Common practice within the museum field may be explained in deaccession procedure with the caution that a decision to deviate from such practice should be accompanied by strong justification.

In some states, if substantial material is to be deaccessioned, it may be necessary—or at least prudent—to contact the Attorney General's Office. Note any applicable law or local policy in the museum's deaccession procedures.

Finally, it is advisable to prepare in advance a news release concerning a planned deaccession and to designate a spokesman.

If these guidelines are followed, a museum should end up with procedures that provide a well-informed review of each deaccession question. This is all the law requires. The law does not demand infallibility, it just expects good-faith attention to duty and reasonable diligence.

(Information given in this article should not be construed as legal advice. Individual questions should be referred to competent counsel.) □

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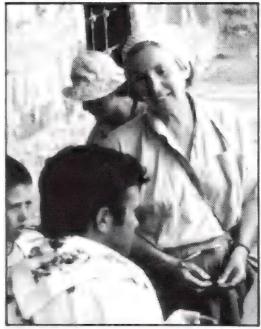
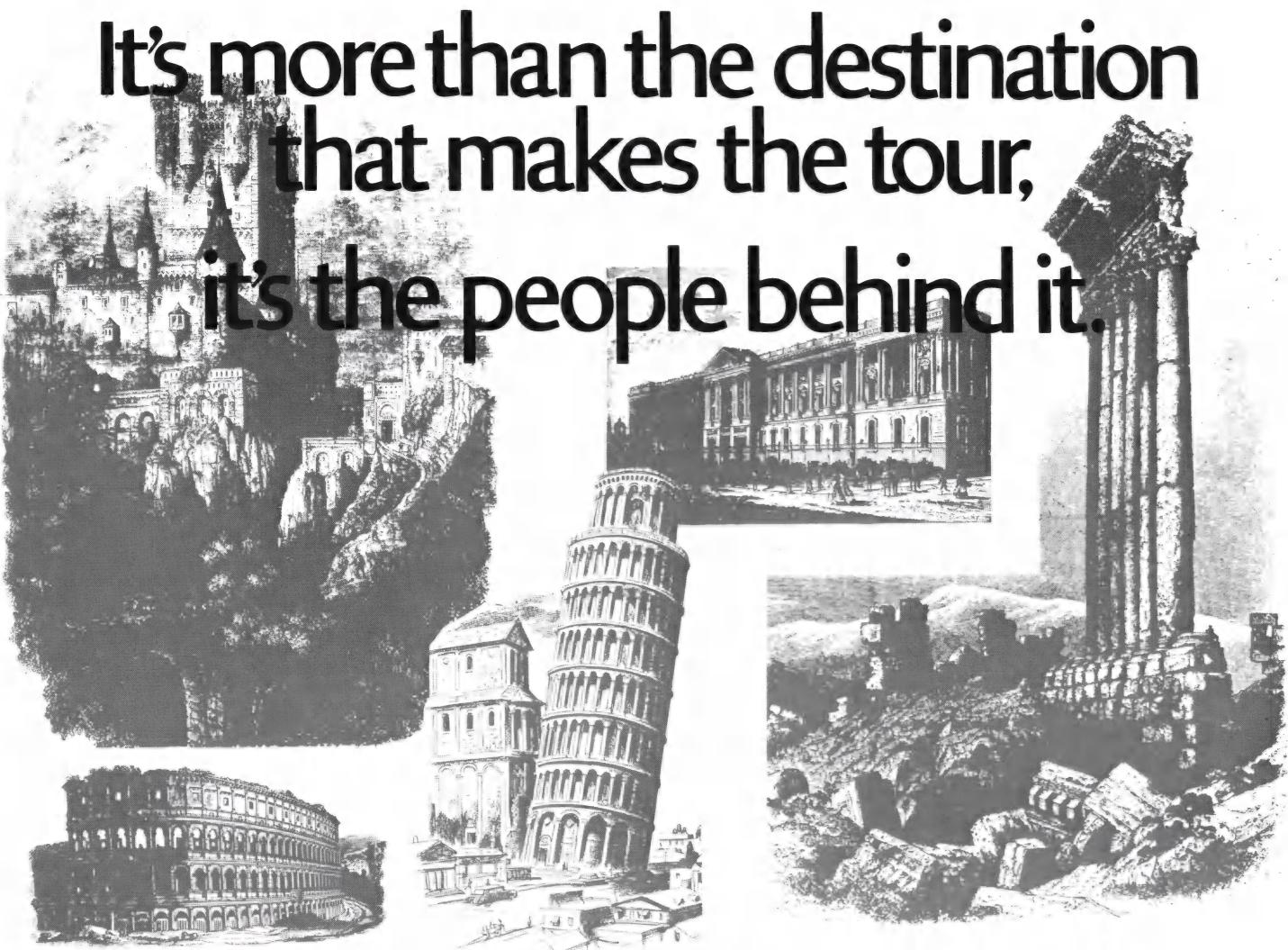
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# The Year of the Other Shoe

**By Geoffrey Platt Jr.,  
Director of Government Affairs**

The Chinese give each year a name: for 1988 it's the Year of the Dragon. For museums and the federal government, it is the Year of the Other Shoe, as in the expression "waiting for the other shoe to drop." This year, initiatives and events that began in 1987 will come to fruition, and have a potentially serious impact on America's museums.

There are several overarching issues that will be resolved. First, obviously, is the election of the next president of the United States. What priority will the new administration place on cultural funding? One would hope that the campaign will reveal candidates' positions on such an issue. The AAM, along with other major national cultural service organizations, is seeking position statements on cultural funding from those in the race and from the major political parties.

Pronouncements notwithstanding, the new president's hands may be tied by a major factor: the condition of the economy. The October 1987 stock market cataclysm, and the continuing dreadful trade deficit, has led many practitioners of the "dismal science" to warn of a possible recession, accompanied by higher inflation and interest rates. Such an occurrence, on top of a federal deficit that despite recent stabilization is still too large, could only result in a squeezing down of the federal budget and accompanying cutbacks. Furthermore, any economic downturn could mean negatives for museums in general regarding contributions, costs of operations, and the like.

Setting aside these cosmic issues, there are several important and definite congressional matters that were set in motion last year, and we can expect at least some resolution early this year. The House Ways and Means Oversight subcommittee will issue its long-awaited report on the tax code's

treatment of revenue-producing activities of nonprofit organizations. The battle to preserve tax exemptions for related business activities, one in which AAM has been deeply involved, may not be completely settled in 1988, but the lines have been clearly drawn and the issue fully joined. And AAM (to complete this military metaphor) will need all its troops in the field.

One of the reasons why legislative issues might not all be resolved is that this is also a congressional election year, when all 435 House seats and a third of the Senate's are up. Schedules have a way of slipping, as November 8 looms larger and members hanker to be home reminding voters why they need to return to D.C. (sometimes legislators like to push bills through for campaign trail credit, but if measures are controversial resolution is often deferred until after the sponsor is safely returned to office). In any case, with the conventions in the summer and an early adjournment for campaigning and the election, there is not much time in which to do a lot of work.

Also on the tax front is the need for \$14 billion in additional revenue, mandated by last November's White House-congressional budget agreement. Will the tax-writing committees consider again the measures museums and nonprofits beat back in 1987, such as the 5-percent tax on endowment income? Despite it being an election year, pressure to raise revenue will be intense.

Tax-exempt organizations, especially museums, will likely begin the fight this year to restore the full deductibility of appreciated property stripped from the tax code in 1986. Whether now is the time for all-out effort or not will depend on the political winds and an evaluation of donation levels for 1987—the first tax year

giving is affected by the alternative minimum tax. AAM will be collecting data to see if our worst fears were realized: that the tax-code revision had a chilling effect on donors of appreciated property, especially objects. It may be necessary to wait for the results of an additional tax year (for example, 1988), one that did not present the incentive to give that existed in 1987 because of the cost of contributions going up in 1988 due to the final stage of rate-lowering.

The vagaries of the legislative process, which makes all predictions—especially chronological ones—dubious, are well exemplified by the course of S. 187, The Native American Cultural Preservation Act, sponsored by Senator John Melcher (D-MT). The bill, regarding repatriation of American Indian sacred objects and human remains held by museums, was introduced in December 1986; hearings were held in February 1987 but it has been in the process of being rewritten since that time. A full substitute is expected to emerge in 1988 and may require another hearing. If it resembles the original bill in its adversarial, nonconciliatory approach to this sensitive issue and in its creation of federal precedent on repatriation of cultural objects, then AAM will be very active in presenting museums' interests in opposition.

There are other items, to be sure, ranging from the bills regarding volunteers and civil liability to revision of the copyright law, that require our attention, and on which 1988 will see progress. It will be a busy and critical time for museums on Capitol Hill. We invite you to see firsthand and take part in the advocacy process by coming to Washington for AAM's Spring Legislative Conference and Advocacy Day, April 12-13. At that time, we can all evaluate just how far and how fast the other shoe has fallen. □

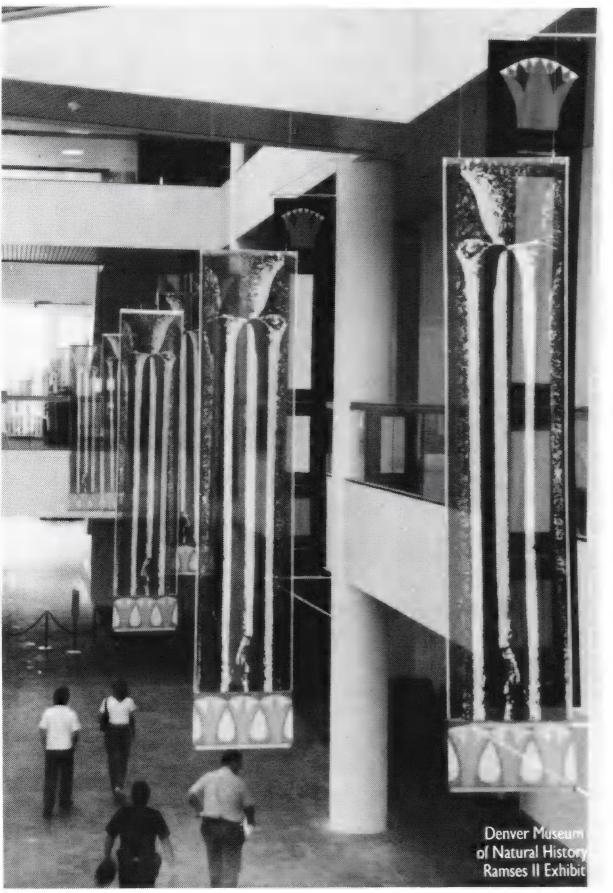
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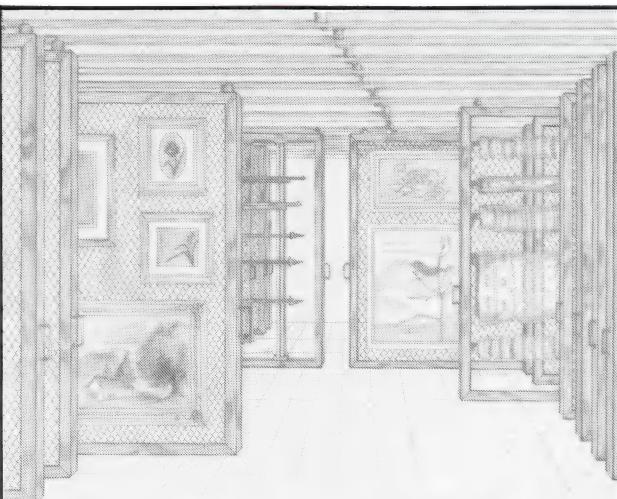
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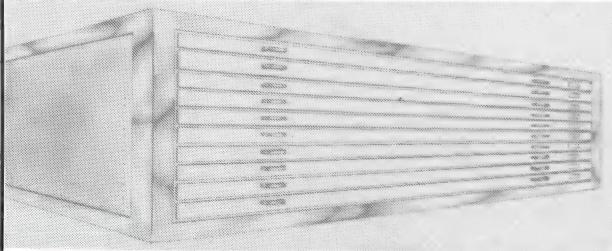
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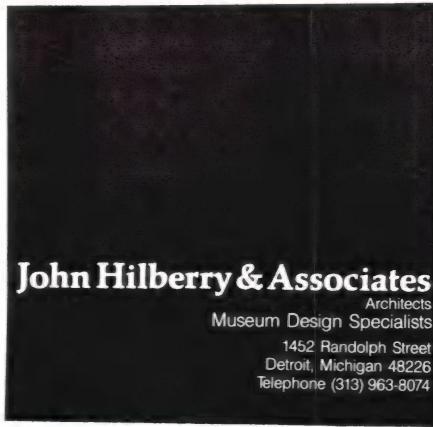
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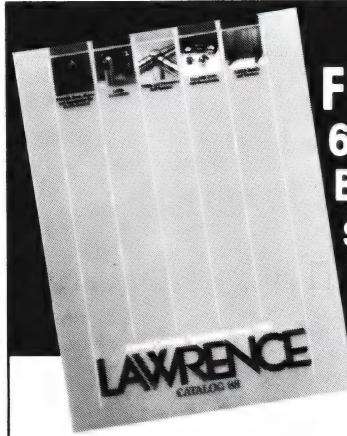


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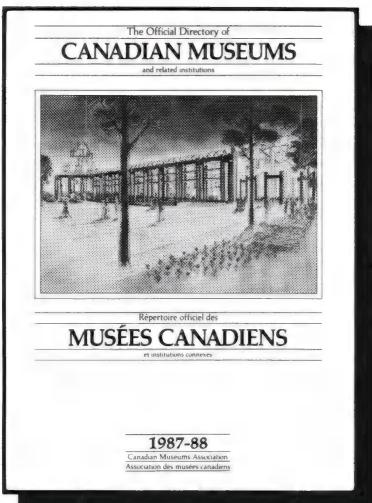
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# Proving Value

## Museums' Economic Contributions to Their Communities

By Thomas A. Livesay

**M**useums are often victims of their own success. Museums of the 1980s are operating in a different theater than in years past and, more often than not, by a set of ever-changing rules that augment, define, and alter their priorities. While we wish that everyone would immediately recognize museums' impor-

do we make certain that we can effectively compete with other agencies (and services) whose worth may not be questioned, such as jails, health care, transportation, and education?

Along with an increased program of earned income, the museum chose to adopt an aggressive stance that, with luck, would get it past the years of

New Mexico and that the museum was a major destination. But to what extent was this the case? And how could we prove our point?

We decided to conduct an economic impact study for the museum. A total of 349 persons were interviewed at the three museums in Santa Fe, as well as another 148 persons at the five monuments scattered around the state. The figures from the study, backed up by the precision of the admission numbers, were staggering. The findings showed that with a general fund appropriation of \$3.1 million in 1985-86, the museum generated or helped to generate:

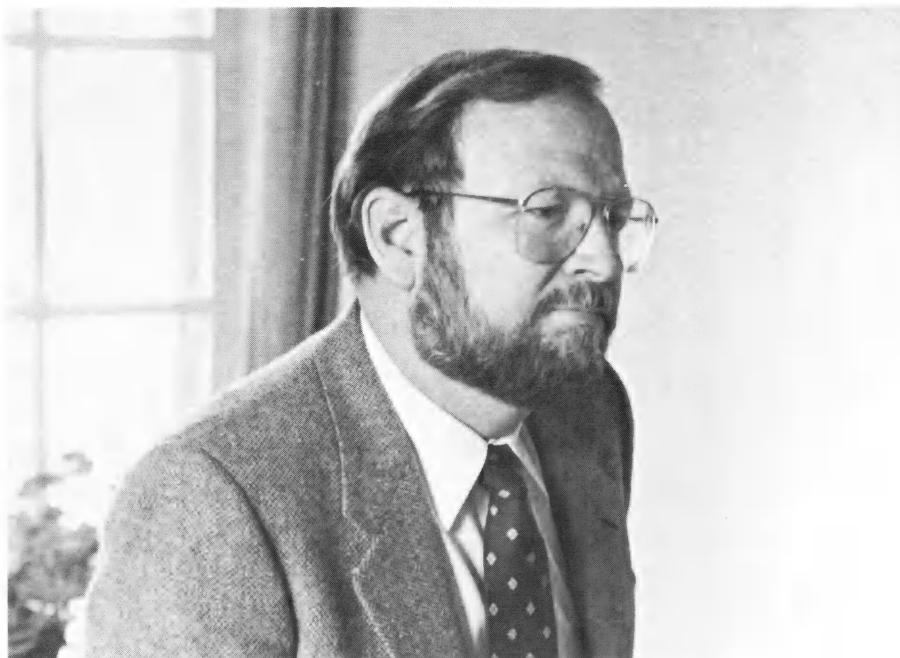
- \$244.8 million in total economic impact on the New Mexico economy, or 79 times its state allocation. This means that the museum helps bring in \$79 to the state economy for every \$1 it spends.

- \$12 million in sales tax to the state annually, or roughly 3.9 times its annual allocation. This means that every \$1 spent by the state on the museum helps bring in \$3.90 to the state as revenues from gross receipts tax.

Since the museum had accurate admission figures, the report can be easily updated on an annual basis by applying the data to the appropriate formulas.

In addition to the basic economic impact, the report provided an analysis of how the museum and state monuments attract tourists to the state.

There is, however, a potential downside. While the economic impact of the museum may need to be stressed from time to time, the process should be selective and always with the caveat that the museum serves a broader purpose. Nevertheless, the results of the museum economic impact study have been most gratifying. For the first time, friendly legislators had ammunition to assist the agency in its financial request. □



tance to the rest of society, the truth is that their worth is questioned with increasing frequency.

In New Mexico, as in many other states, the economic crunch brought about by falling oil, gas, and mineral prices in 1984-85 created a new competitiveness among state agencies as they scrambled for available funds. The Museum of New Mexico, as part of the Office of Cultural Affairs, represented a relatively small agency within the state system. The common fear was that the museum would be lost in the shuffle for funding or would become an easy target for budget cuts.

The question, in late 1986, was simply, How do we sell ourselves? How

economic difficulties. Fortunately, one tool was already at hand that would greatly assist those efforts—an extremely sophisticated admissions program. Not only did this program deliver dollars back to the museum; it also served as an excellent demographic tool. Every Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday, the cashiers asked for the area code of each visitor, which was entered into the computerized cash register. The resulting print-out yielded precise information concerning the origin of visitors. Fully 75 percent of visitors to the Museum of New Mexico were from out of state, or out of the country. It was obvious that a lot of people were coming to

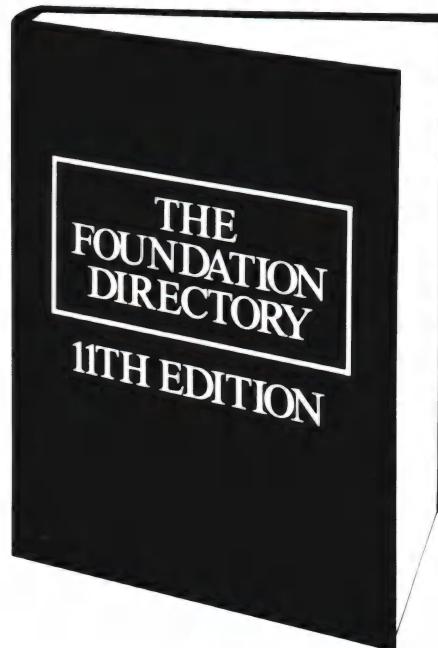
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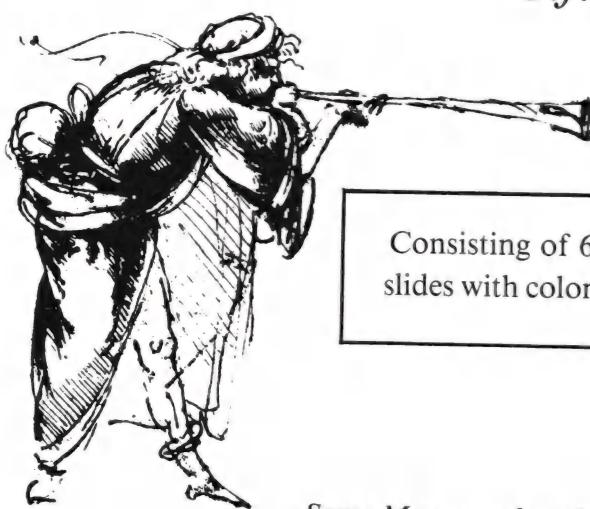
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(AAM)

# But Have You Seen Pittsburgh?

By R. Jay Gangewere



**C**an one city be reborn three times in 30 years?

After burning itself out in the fire and smoke of steel-making during World War II, Pittsburgh rose Phoenix-like from its ashes in the 1950s, and pursued an afterlife which it called "The Pittsburgh Renaissance." It was the first city after the war to recreate itself according to a master plan. By the 1960s it was a model for city planners throughout the United States.

Then in the 1970s, after pollution controls, new parks, and skyscrapers at the Golden Triangle, and the rediscovery of one of the most dramatic city settings of any North American city, Pittsburgh went into Renaissance

II. This brought a new building boom, a light-rail transit system, more parks, and striking restorations such as an urban mall in a 1900 train station (Station Square), and a home for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in a spectacular movie theater (Heinz Hall). One sign of the city's transformation was the statistical ranking of Pittsburgh, in 1985 by Rand McNally, as "America's most livable city."

City planners are now intent on establishing a cultural scene that will complete the transformation of a 19th-century mill town into a 21st-century mecca of culture.

So what *is* it about Pittsburgh? What *is* so special? As a native New Yorker who has experienced a num-

ber of American cities and lived abroad, I think I know.

The prime mover is geography. Pittsburgh is a hilly, mountainous city that never stops giving you a visual lift. Downtown is built on a triangle where three rivers meet—the Allegheny flowing south from New York State and the Monongahela flowing north from West Virginia to form what the French called *la belle rivière*, the Ohio.

The hills and valleys of Pittsburgh signal a second feature—stable ethnic pockets with strong neighborhood traditions. There's Polish Hill, and Troy Hill (where the 19th-century Germans settled), and Squirrel Hill (a large Jewish community), and simply

"The Hill" (a black community upon which the TV series "Hill Street Blues" is based).

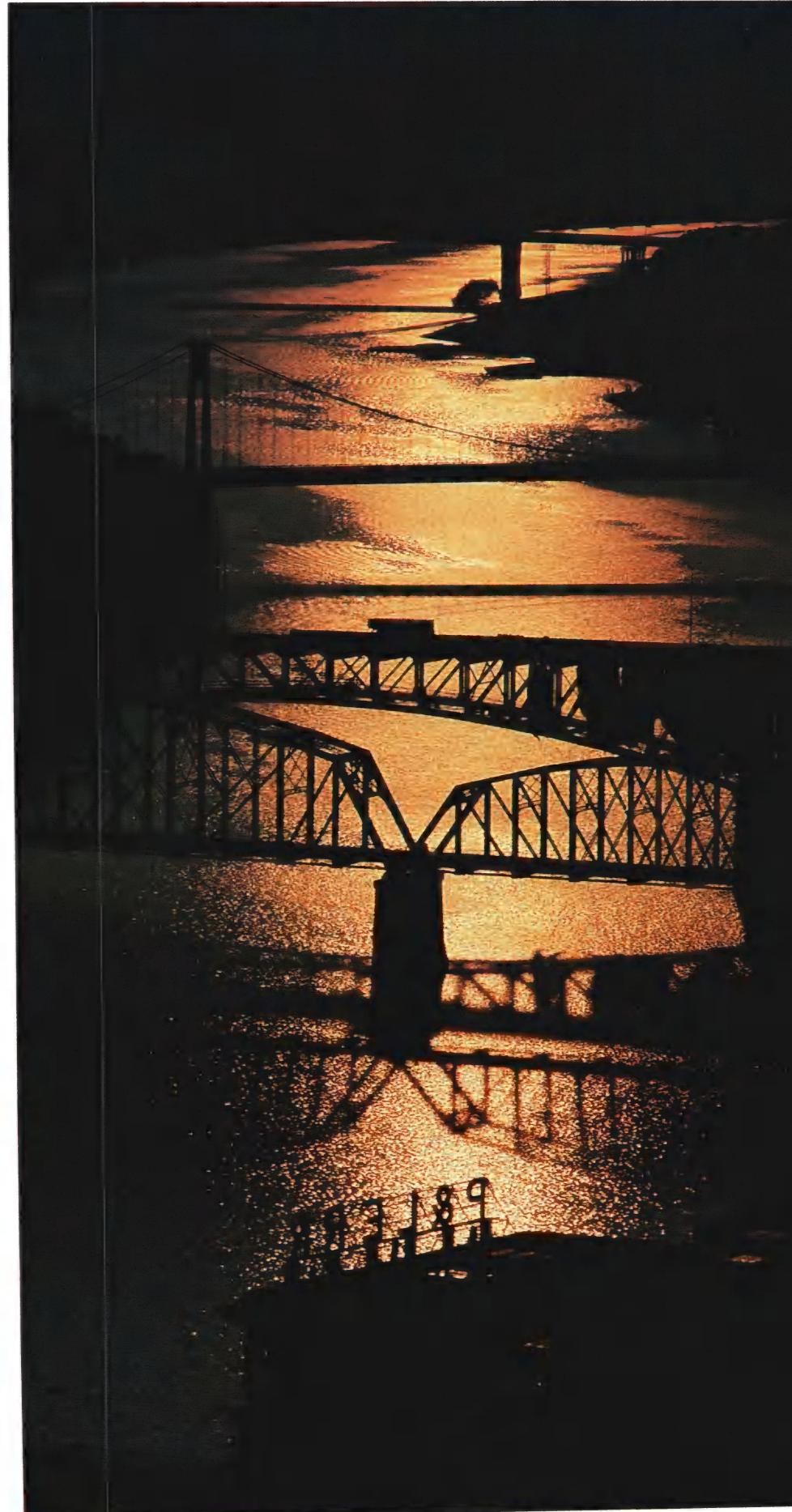
For many reasons, the business leaders of Pittsburgh, such as R.K. Mellon, Andrew Carnegie, H.J. Heinz and his late son, Henry Heinz II, cared immensely about this city. Carnegie paternally lavished his money on "Dear old smokey Pittsburgh." His magnificent culture center, The Carnegie, could not be duplicated by any city in the world. In Pittsburgh, business power joined with city power (as when industrialist Mellon joined with Mayor David L. Lawrence to create Renaissance I) in ways that few cities could envision.

And beneath it all is the symbol of the steelworker, Joe Magarac, who knows nothing but making steel, and finally hurls himself into the furnace to become steel himself. This is a city with a dramatic past, a pantheon of leaders, a communal memory. . .facts that become important when you live in a place.

When AAM holds its convention this June 3-7 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, visitors will be able to walk directly into Pittsburgh's newest hotel, the Vista International at Liberty Center. Just four blocks north is "The Strip," the city's old-style out-of-doors food market, where people come in droves (especially on Saturdays) to hand pick their fruits, vegetables, and everything else edible. Close to the Allegheny River, it is an area slated for development, and everyone from the mayor to the smallest grocer is interested in preserving its country-market honesty despite major riverfront projects.

Four blocks from the convention

From its distinctive skyline to its characteristic bridges, Pittsburgh's appealing urban landscape awaits AAM delegates.



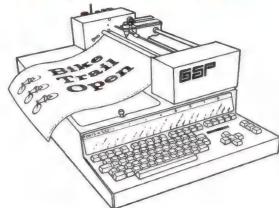
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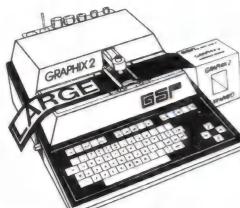
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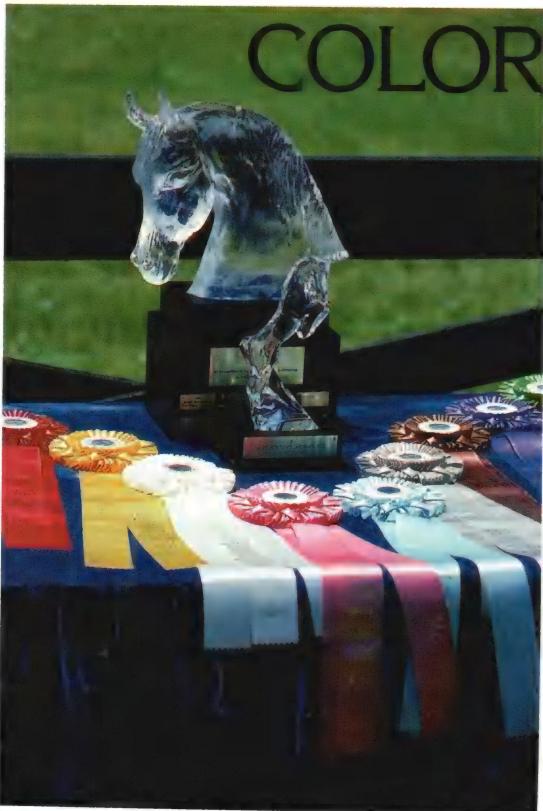
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center is the city's classic hotel, the Westin William Penn (built 1913), right in the heart of the government and business district. Guests at this hotel will be just across the street from the city's great landmarks. West of the hotel is Mellon Square, a centerpiece of Renaissance I; this urban park is a great place to people-watch at lunchtime on any given workday. East is the USX Tower (the U.S. Steel Building), by far the tallest building in the city, and nearby is the famous masterpiece by 19th-century architect Henry Hobson Richardson, the Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail (1888).

A new rapid-transit system links all downtown areas and major hotels, but AAM delegates staying at the conference hotels will be within easy walking distance of the convention center.

Across the Monongahela is the new urban mall, Station Square, a 40-acre example of adapting old architecture to exciting new commercial uses—on the scale of similar developments in New York, Boston, and San Francisco. The turn-of-the-century Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad Terminal is now a shopping and restaurant center. The Grand Concourse Restaurant once was the waiting room for railroad travelers.

The local passion for reusing grand old buildings is also evident in two large entertainment centers—both originally lavish movie palaces from the 1920s. Heinz Hall is the home of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts is used for the opera, the ballet, and major traveling shows. These are the cornerstones of Pittsburgh's claim as an entertainment center in the decades ahead.

The areas around the Golden Triangle also offer a lot. On the North Side is the Buhl Science Center, the Aviary, the Pittsburgh Children's Museum, the Pittsburgh Public Theater, the Mattress Factory (an arts center), and the architecturally striking Allegheny branch of the Pittsburgh Library. On the South Side a new art gallery scene, and new restaurants, are flourishing, the inevitable spin-off from the success of Station Square.

To the east is Oakland and the East End, where culture first put its roots down in Pittsburgh. People once escaped the smoke from the mills by going to Schenley Park and the attendant cultural facilities. Here you find The Carnegie with its museums of art and natural history, and music

Old Economy, a 19th-century village just a few miles down the Ohio from Pittsburgh. Trips to both these places are part of the pre- and post-conference tour package being offered to AAM members. (Register early if you plan on visiting these popular sites.)

Pittsburgh is a friendly, homey city.



Pittsburgh's 10K Great Race runs through the Squirrel Hill neighborhood.

hall and library, and the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie-Mellon University. There are art galleries, the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Phipps Conservatory (flower and botanical displays), and unexpected tourist treats such as the Nationality Rooms of the University of Pittsburgh and the Stephen Foster Memorial. East of Oakland is the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts and the Frick Art Museum, with a permanent collection of fine art assembled by the daughter of another Pittsburgh industrialist, Henry Clay Frick.

Visitors to Pittsburgh often make the 71-mile trip to Fallingwater, Frank Lloyd Wright's famous country house nestled in the western Pennsylvania mountains, or relish an excursion to

But as a visitor you can walk like an Olympian god or goddess upon the heights (of Mt. Washington) and look down upon this city as if it were a sparkling toy at your feet. Or you can burst upon it from the William Pitt Tunnel (as everyone arriving from the airport does) and see Pittsburgh as an instant introduction to 20th-century life. You can see the city from the Top of the Tower restaurant at the USX Tower, or view it over dinner from one of the fine restaurants that line Mt. Washington.

Have you seen Pittsburgh? In June of 1988, when AAM holds its annual meeting in the Renaissance city, you can. □

*Next Issue: The Architecture of Pittsburgh.*

## Museum News Almanac

### Fifty Years Ago:

#### Modern Structure Goes Up At Grand Rapids

The Grand Rapids Public Museum, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Frank L. Du Mond director, has under construction a new \$180,000 building which will embody such modern ideas as street show windows, complete artificial lighting of exhibit halls, air conditioning, and easily removable "curtain" partitions.

*The Museum News* (Feb. 15, 1938)

### Twenty-five Years Ago:

#### From the Desk of S. Dillon Ripley

. . . I think our government spokesmen so far have failed entirely to grasp the meaning of a museum as a living, laboratory-like research institution. Again it is a question of the facade. The government, as it were, stops with the exhibits, the collection. There is not a real understanding of what goes on behind the exhibits. It is part of the reason why the museum is grouped loosely into a category with the performing arts. Where the museum should be considered as a company of scholars like a college or university, it gets left hanging out on a limb as an exhibit, part of our culture like a dance group or a troop of folk singers, only fossilized.

S. Dillon Ripley  
Director  
Peabody Museum of  
Natural History  
New Haven, CT  
*Museum News* (March 1963) □

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### In the Next Issue of *Museum News* . . . Museum Architecture.

The next issue will feature a look at the past decade of new museum building with special articles devoted to zoos and botanical gardens. In our round table, three major architects and four museum directors will discuss the challenges of planning for a new museum and what the future holds for architectural design of museums.

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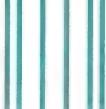
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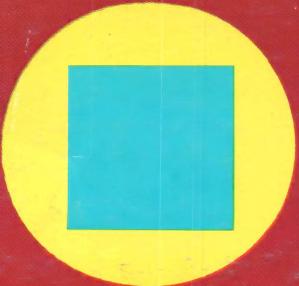
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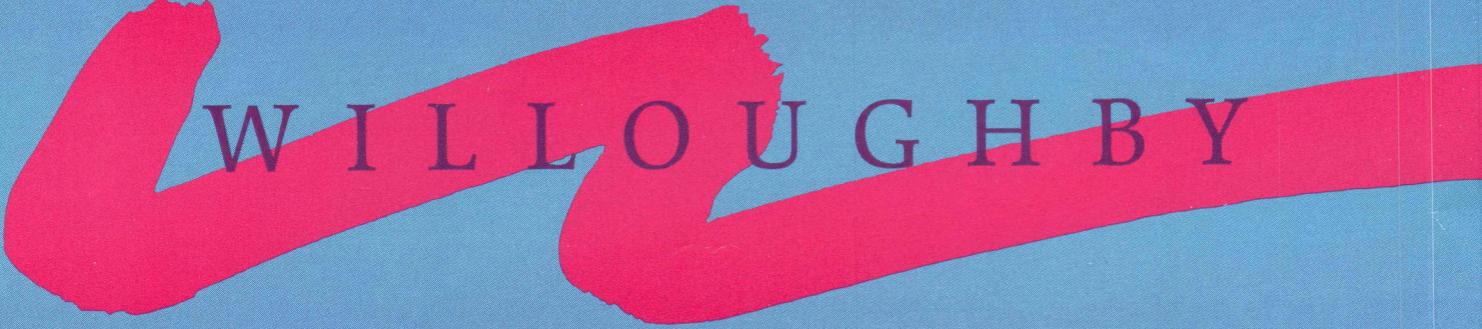
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